

MORDAUNT.

SKETCHES
OF
LIFE, CHARACTERS, AND MANNERS,
IN
VARIOUS COUNTRIES;

INCLUDING THE
MEMOIRS
OF
A FRENCH LADY OF QUALITY.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF ZELUCO & EDWARD.

VOL. II.

Ficta voluptatis causa sint proxima veris.

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MORDAUNT.

*The STORY of Madame la MARQUISE de ———,
as narrated by herself to Miss CLIFFORD.*

MY father was a man of birth and of considerable fortune, most of which he had spent in the service before he married my mother ; but he then enjoyed court favour, a government, and other lucrative offices. He was forty years of age, and she only twenty. Her fortune was more ample than his had ever been ; yet he had so liberal and magnificent a turn of mind, that, when he died, my mother's fortune, of which he could draw only the rents, was all he left as a provision for his family.

Three years before his death I had been boarded in a convent, contrary to the inclina-

tion of my mother, who would rather that I had been educated at home under her own eye : but my father gave frequent entertainments, was proud of my mother's accomplishments, and feared that her attention to my education would often prevent her from appearing in those assemblies, of which he considered her as the greatest ornament. My mother yielded *with regret* a point which she thought very material.

The convent in which I was boarded, and where I remained three years, had a high reputation. Those nuns, to which the education of the boarders is peculiarly intrusted, execute the task, for the most part, in a conscientious manner, and to the best of their understanding. The impression they make on the young mind very often remains through life. This impression has an opposite effect, according to the character of those on which it is made. Some it renders superstitious ; others, soon after they are introduced into society, on hearing some of the notions and

practices they learned at the convent turned into ridicule, are apt to become irreligious. On me the impression was of the first kind ; for, at the time I was removed from the convent, I had a great inclination to become a nun.

[Here I could not help interrupting the marchioness with a sudden exclamation—

“ Good heaven ! to become a nun.”

“ Yes, my dear,” resumed she, smiling :
“ and if at that age you had lived as long in the same society, for some of the nuns were extremely amiable as well as pious, I make no doubt but you would have had the same inclination.”]

Secluded from the ordinary occupations of life, it is not surprising that they should place almost the whole of goodness in the performance of religious ceremonies and devout contemplations. Some particular ceremonies may even be amusing to the fancy of a child ; and at any rate was, I thought, an easy purchase for that eternal happiness to be secured by performing them, and which I was instructed

would be endangered by living more at large in the world.

An incident of a peculiar nature, however, induced my mother to insist with my father that I should be removed from the convent sooner than she had agreed to: after which the company and conversation of my mother gradually diminished my prejudice in favour of the convent, and I lost all desire to be a nun: but while she endeavoured to efface every trace of childish superstition from my mind, she took equal pains to imprint sentiments of rational piety in their stead. She described superstition to me as a weakness, which she thought, however, had not so pernicious an effect on the female character as infidelity; she told me that the most profligate women she had ever known were those who were, or affected to be, infidels: superstition, therefore, she contemned, but impiety filled her with horror.

[I again interrupted the marchioness's narrative, saying, "that, if she had no objection, I had some curiosity to know what the inci-

dent was which determined her mother to remove her from the convent sooner than she had before agreed to :” but thinking that she hesitated a little, I immediately added, “ that if it was of a secret nature, or if, for any other reason, she had the smallest scruple to communicate it, I begged she would forgive me, and proceed.”

“ Secret nature—no—it is rather of a ridiculous nature,” answered the marchioness : “ but, such as it is, since you wish to know it, you shall be indulged.”]

You can hardly form a notion, my dear Miss Clifford, (continued the marchioness,) of the strange incongruous ideas that may be united in the brain of young persons by certain impressions, and by the ambiguity of words. In the convent in which I was, a young relation of mine was also a boarder—about fifteen years of age, of a lively imagination, and considered as a little faint, on account of the animation of her gestures in performing the usual ceremonies of devotion,

and the fervour of her expressions, when she spoke on religious subjects.

Sermons were occasionally preached in the chapel adjoining to the convent. A tall, handsome ecclesiastic, of a majestic appearance, preached an eloquent sermon on the love we owe to God. This sermon, and the preacher, seemed to make a deep impression on the young lady: she was more thoughtful than usual, and sometimes seemed quite lost in meditation. She told me one day, that though she had always loved God, she was now sensible that she never had, in the degree that she ought, until she heard the comely ecclesiastic's sermon. She owned, that her former love approached to coldness, when compared with what she now felt; that formerly she seldom had thought of him, except when she was at her prayers, and sometimes not even then; but now he entirely occupied her thoughts by day and night.

This young lady's mother had been for a considerable time in a distant province of

France. The daughter had always mentioned her to me in the most affectionate terms, regretting the causes which kept her so long absent, and looking forward to her return as a source of happiness.

My mother called one day at the convent, and informed the young lady, that her mother, finding that she would be detained still a considerable time in the country, and being impatient to see her, was to send a person to Paris, to accompany the young lady to the province ;—that she might therefore prepare for her departure within a few days.

So far from manifesting any appearance of joy, as my mother expected, the young lady seemed rather afflicted at the news.

“What! are you not happy at the thoughts of returning so soon to Languedoc?” said my mother.

“No,” replied she; “I would rather remain where I am.”

“Are you not impatient to see your mo-

ther?—I thought you had been exceedingly fond of your mother.”

“So I am very fond of her—exceedingly fond of her, that is certain: but do not imagine that I love her as I love God, for I do love him. Gracious Heaven!” cried she, clasping her hands and turning up her eyes, “how I do love him!”

My mother, on farther inquiry, having discovered the date and occasion of this violent passion, thought proper to remove me from the convent that very evening, and to send the young lady to her parents, at Languedoc, a few days after.

Though my mother was solicitous to lower that species of exultation on certain subjects, which my fancy had acquired in the nunnery, yet she was sensible that every attempt of that sort was to be managed with delicacy; for, as she afterwards informed me, she had heard a girl of twelve years of age, who after the death of her parents had been boarded in a convent, tell her guardian, a

man of piety and literature, on his explaining some religious article differently from the sense in which she understood it, "that in all points which concerned her salvation she would adhere to her own opinion; in other matters, of less importance, she would endeavour to show due deference to his."

If my mother had abruptly opposed certain notions which I carried with me from the convent, and have since renounced, I am by no means certain that I should not have made some such answer as that of this self-sufficient girl; and if my opinion had been violently attacked, my prejudice in its favour would probably have increased by mere dint of defending it.

[Having again apologised to the marchioness for my interruption, and thanked her for her complaisance, she proceeded in her narrative.]

The style in which my mother lived, after the death of my father, might have been called retired, when compared with what it

had been before : yet she still cultivated a select circle of acquaintance. As she was passionately fond of music, she went sometimes to the opera, and attended private concerts still oftener : she also carried me with her, on a few occasions, to what is properly called the *Théâtre Française*. During my father's life-time she attended the court assiduoufly ; after his death she very seldom went, unless on public occasions ; though she continued to see the princess Elizabeth as often as that virtuous princess, who had a great esteem for my mother, signified a desire that she should go to Versailles.

As I was an only child, and heiress to my mother's fortune, it will not surprise you that I had lovers. Several gentlemen asked her permission to pay me their addresses : none of them interested me ; and she put an end to their suits, one after another, without expressing either approbation or disapprobation of my indifference. She wished to observe how I was myself inclined, without interfer-

ing before it was necessary. At last, a man of higher name, and more illustriously connected than any who had addressed me hitherto, declared his passion for me: he was handsome, genteel in his person, and related to a young lady for whom I had conceived a friendship. Though I heard his declaration with more satisfaction than I had listened to any language of the same kind before, yet I *seemed* to treat it as common-place compliment; and when he was about to enforce it with new protestations, he was interrupted by some company that joined us.

I do not know why I did not inform my mother of this; perhaps I thought it more becoming that *he* should speak to her in the first place; perhaps I was a little afraid she might not approve: the truth is, I did not mention it when I had an opportunity; and the omission did not proceed from forgetfulness.

When he repeated his former declaration to me, I answered, "that I never listened

to language of that nature from any man without the approbation of my mother."

He soon found an opportunity of explaining himself to her. She was better acquainted with this person's character than I was, and did not at all approve of his proposal. She said to him, however, "that much would depend on myself, and that she would talk to me on the subject."

Having construed what I last said to him as an acquiescence, he told my mother that he had already obtained *my* consent, and now only needed hers,

At this my mother expressed surprise, and repeated, that she would speak with me.

The only time I ever saw any thing like reserve, in my dear mother's behaviour towards me, or any expression but that of fondness in her eyes, when directed to me, was when I first met her after her interview with this man, who I shall call by the name of Count; not wishing to distinguish him more particularly, out of regard to his family.

I had been out in the carriage with a lady, his relation, when he had called on my mother. We returned together to dinner.

Other company came after dinner ; so that she had no opportunity of speaking with me till all had withdrawn.

The alteration in my mother's manner affected me so much, that the lady said—“ What can be the matter with you, my dear ; you were all cheerfulness while we were abroad, and now you seem quite sorrowful !” I answered—“ I was not very well ;” but begged she would take no notice of it, lest it should make my mother uneasy.

As soon as the company were gone, my mother withdrew to her own apartment. I followed : my bed-chamber was adjoining to hers. She dismissed her maid as well as mine, who attended to undress us, saying she would ring when she needed them.

Bursting into tears as soon as they were gone—“ Ah ! my dear mother, I fear you are displeased with me.”

"Indeed, Adelaide," said she, "I am."

"Though convinced, from your behaviour, that I have done something wrong, yet I am unconscious what it is."

"Do you pretend not to be sensible," resumed she, "that I have reason to be offended?"

"I *pretend* nothing," replied I; "I believe I must have acted improperly, but I am not sensible in what; pray inform me, that I may undo it directly."

"Can you perceive no impropriety in assenting to the addresses of the Count, without consulting me?"

"I assented to nothing. On the contrary, I told him, "That I could listen to no man's addresses without your approbation."

"Even that was a kind of implication," said she, "that you would be pleased with his addresses if I should approve."

"Was it not also an implication, my dearest madam, that I should never more listen to them if you should *not* approve?"

"He might not see that so clearly," she replied.

"He shall find it, however," said I.

"The Count told me that he had obtained your consent," continued my mother.

"In that he told a falsehood," said I; "for my answer was what I have already mentioned, and nothing else."

"You must be sensible," resumed my mother, "that your happiness, my dear, is the object nearest my heart."

"I am fully persuaded of it," I answered.

"Do you really wish, then, that I should consent to your being the wife of this man?"

"I shall never wish that you should consent to what you do not approve."

"The birth of the Count, his splendid connexions, his external appearance, perhaps, may have influenced you a little in his favour."

"If ever those circumstances had any influence with me in his favour, they now weigh against him."

“How so?”

“Because,” replied I, “as it is evident you do not approve of him, I am convinced that you have some objection which outweighs all those advantages.”

“Indeed, my dear, I have,” said she with fervour; “and my objection is, that I have the strongest reason for thinking that he has a wicked heart. Heaven forbid, that all the rank, that all the riches, or any thing else which this world can bestow, should ever prevail on me to ally my child with vice!”

She afterwards told me, that she was informed of the real character of the Count, partly from those who had known him from his childhood, and partly from certain adventures of his, which she had accidentally come to the knowledge of, though unknown to the public, and of which he himself was ignorant that she was acquainted. She assured me that he was devoid of principle, haughty, overbearing, and addicted to mean company, from

a love of that adulation which such only can bestow.

Of the haughtiness of the Count I had a pretty strong proof the following day, when he called and found me alone.

I signified to him, in the most polite terms I could, that I declined the proposal he had done me the honour to make.

"What!" said he, "your mother disapproves of me, then?"

"I have not mentioned my mother, sir," said I; "but I have informed you of my own sentiments."

"I plainly perceive," said he, frowning, "that this comes from your mother."

"Yet," replied I, piqued at his insolent manner, "I cannot see any thing wonderful or unnatural in supposing it to come entirely from myself."

My mother entered the room at this moment—

"I understood," said he, "madam, that

the proposal I made to you would depend on your daughter's own decision."

"I am happy to find," said she, "that my daughter and I think in the same way."

"You will permit me, madam," said he, "to have some small doubt on that head."

"Pray, sir, on what is your doubt founded?"

"On this, madam; that it is more probable that I may not hit the fancy of an *old* woman than of a young one."

Having pronounced this insolent speech, he withdrew, with an air of arrogance.

This behaviour bears more resemblance to the manners of the rudest people of Europe, than to what might be expected from a man of rank, in a country distinguished for politeness, before all traces of politeness, as well as of humanity, were banished from the nation. I have heard it remarked, however, by some who have had opportunities of comparing the characters of the various nations of Europe, that though Frenchmen were more

polite than their neighbours by art, yet they were less so by nature, owing to an impetuosity of temperament, which, on the shadow of provocation, makes them forget restraints of every kind, and hurries into imprudencies and difficulties, from which even submission and adulation cannot extricate them. The Count furnished an example of this. A few days after his insolence to my mother, he wrote her a penitential letter, acknowledging the impertinence of his behaviour, begging her pardon in the humblest manner, and expressing his hopes that she would allow him to renew his addresses, and to endeavour to efface the bad impression which his foolish and insolent conduct must have made on me.

He also prevailed on some of his relations to plead his cause with my mother; and though he had every reason to believe that, after what had passed, all would be without success, yet, when he found that we persevered in the sentiments already expressed, he

stormed and raged as if it had been a fresh injury.

Soon after this, monsieur le marquis de M—— was introduced into the society my mother most frequented. I had many opportunities of meeting and conversing with him. He was endowed with every thing which could render him attractive to woman, except fortune: that was precisely what I laid the least stress upon. It is not surprising, therefore, that he made a strong impression on my heart; and it was with the utmost satisfaction that I perceived, in spite of the pains he took to conceal it, that I had made the same on his. On his part, however, he had no suspicion of my partiality for him. As I am certain, that in other matters monsieur de M—— has more penetration than I can boast, I conclude that, in this particular business of love, women are generally quicker-sighted than men. What confirms me in this opinion is, that my mother discovered not only his passion for me, but also my partiality for him, long before

he had any idea of it himself. In consequence of this observation, without relying on the favourable notion she had of him, she made minute inquiry, from those who had been acquainted with him from his infancy, concerning his disposition, temper, particular habits, and propensities; and, having received satisfactory information on those points, she suddenly said to me, one forenoon, when I was in a kind of reverie—"Pray, Adelaide, what do you think of monsieur de M——?"

As monsieur de M—— was the very man I was thinking of, the abruptness of this question made me start, and afterwards blush, as if I had been detected in a crime; for I knew that he was a younger brother, and had little or no fortune; and I was by no means convinced that my mother would put as little stress on that article as I did. Indeed I had been so much accustomed to hear myself spoken of as an heiress, and entitled to marry a man of fortune as well as birth, that I laid my account with being universally censured,

if I ever should dispose of my hand otherwise.

Seeing my surprise and confusion at the question, my mother resumed—"I should not have thought that you would have been at any loss to have answered my question, because every body thinks favourably of monsieur de M——, and none more so than myself. I should be surprised, indeed, my dear, to find you of a different opinion."

In the confusion into which my mother's question had thrown me, I did not perceive the playful humour she was in; and I was simple enough to begin to assure her, with earnestness, that I had no reason to think more unfavourably of the gentleman than she and the rest of the world did."

"Well, my dear," said my mother, smiling, "I am glad to find that you are not singular in this instance: but have you any reason to believe that he thinks very favourably of you?"

Though I had not the least doubt on the

subject, this question embarrassed me almost as much as the former. I answered, after hesitation, "that he never had made any declaration of that nature to me."

"That is not exactly an answer to my question," rejoined my mother; "however, I shall take it for granted that you have observed, as clearly as I have done, that although he has made no declaration in words, yet he entertains the sentiments of esteem and love for you."

I did not know what to make of my mother's discourse: my heart fluttered, and my mind was bewildered between hope and fear.

"But you know," resumed she, "that monsieur de M—— is a younger brother, that he has no fortune."

This observation came like a piece of ice to my breast. I was silent.

"Do not you know, my dear, that monsieur de M—— has no fortune?" repeated she.

“But you seem to think,” replied I, assuming courage, “that he has every other good quality.”

“They would not be sufficient to screen you from a thousand mortifications and distresses; unless,” added my mother, seeing me turn pale, “unless you had that necessary article, in which alone he is deficient; but, as you are sufficiently provided in that, if you have as high an opinion of him as I have, you shall have my consent to listen to his addresses, and to give him the answer your heart dictates.”

I threw myself into my mother's arms with all the rapture of filial fondness and gratitude.

[Here I could not help interrupting the marchioness with the exclamation—“What a delightful woman has your mother been!”]

“Ah! Miss Clifford, she was an angel,” cried she—“My guardian angel, assuredly.—But, heavenly powers! where was hers, when

— O let me not think on that dreadful scene !”

The marchioness continued shedding tears, and unable to proceed for a considerable time. I did not interrupt her. She at length dried her eyes, saying, “ Why do I lament the fate of one in heaven ?” And, after another pause, during which she seemed lost in reflection, she exclaimed, “ O what misery has my poor country endured ! France is a real purgatory. What many of the inhabitants have suffered in this world will be considered, I hope, as expiatory in the next.” Then, fixing me, she added — “ But the English do not believe in purgatory ?”

“ Some of them do,” I answered, “ others do not.”

“ Why do they not all believe it ?” resumed she. “ I am surprised, my dear Miss Clifford, that *you* do not. — What reason have you for doubting it ?”

“ Nay, my dear madam,” replied I : “ it

rather falls on you to declare what reason you have for believing it."

"What reason!—what reason! You cannot imagine," resumed she, "that I am deep read in controversy; but I think it a sufficient reason for my believing the doctrine of purgatory, that the vast majority of the most serious and respectable people whom I have known since my infancy, and with whom I have conversed in the course of my life, believe it."

"Is that a good reason?" said I.

"Upon my word I think so, for an ignorant person like me," replied she.

"Why then are you surprised that I do *not* believe the doctrine of purgatory, my dear marchioness?"

"How do you mean? I do not understand you," said she.

"I declare," resumed I, "that I am not more deeply read in controversy than you; but that the vast majority of the most serious

and respectable people whom I have known since my infancy, and with whom I have conversed, do not believe the doctrine of purgatory."

"Well," replied she, smiling, "I perceive you think that you have brought the foundation of our faiths to a level; but you forget that our church, which asserts the doctrine in question, is by far the most ancient."

"Forgive me, I do not forget that," said I: "but I also remember to have heard certain members of *our* church observe, that to *assert* is one thing, and to *prove* is another."

"Does your church," rejoined the marchioness, "assert nothing but what it proves?"

I was relieved from answering this question by the maid entering with tea: and, after she withdrew, the marchioness, instead of repeating it, observed, "that we had been led, she did not know how, into a very singular discussion for two women."

"We have at least discovered," resumed I, "the origin of most people's religious belief,

as well as our own ; that, however different or opposite they may be, they proceed from the same cause, and therefore ought not to be a source of hatred or persecution."

The marchioness agreed very readily to the inference ; but insisted, that " though the foundation was generally laid in the same manner, yet the ground on which some religions stood, and the materials of which they were composed, might be more solid and more genuine than those of others ; and *that* which had stood the longest, in spite of a thousand storms and tempests, was, in her opinion, the most secure."

To this I made no answer ; but I begged the marchioness to resume her narrative, which she did in the following terms.]

Soon after the scene between my mother and me, which I have already described, monsieur de M—— paid his addresses, and the ceremony of our marriage followed at no great distance of time.

The happiness which we enjoyed, during

the short period in which we lived together, I imagine, has been seldom equalled, and never surpassed, in this world. One source of enjoyment to us both was to be witnesses to the satisfaction of my mother, who, delighted with the manner in which she saw us live together, thanked Heaven every day, that, in her daughter's marriage, she had paid more attention to the character than the fortune of her husband.—“ Ah ! my Adelaide,” would she sometimes say, on contemplating the mutual esteem and affection that existed between us, “ what a poor compensation would any quantity of additional wealth be to you for having missed the felicity you now enjoy !”

The happy period I speak of was immediately previous to the revolution. Monsieur de M—— is a man of benevolence, a lover of justice, and one who feels a strong sentiment of indignation at every act of oppression. He was sensible of certain abuses in government, and often regretted the sufferings of the poor, particularly the peasantry, who were more

exposed than others to oppression, and whose comforts, when they taste them, depended, in his opinion, more on the generosity of their lords than on the protection of the laws. Notwithstanding the rank to which he was born, and that his expectations in life had been founded on court-favour, he saw the beginnings of the revolution with satisfaction, from the hopes that such reformation would be adopted as would equally tend to the safety of the monarchy and the happiness of the people. He soon, however, began to be alarmed at the violence of some of the popular leaders, and was every day more shocked at their proceedings. In the progress of events, many of his friends, and some of his relations, emigrated: they wrote, urging him to the same measure. It was even stated, that his not joining those of his countrymen, who were assembling at Coblenz, would be construed into disloyalty or timidity.

He spoke to me on the subject. - For my part, I had never thought on politics or go-

vernment in my life; they were topics I abhorred at that particular time more than ever, because of the everlasting discussions I had for some time heard, in all companies, upon them. When my husband approved of the revolution I adopted his sentiments, because they were his, being fully persuaded that he was a better judge than I. When he changed his opinion I changed mine, for the same reason I had before adopted it. Subsequent events have well confirmed me in my new way of thinking.

Seeing the king and the royal family abandoned by the greater part of the nobility, who had fled from France, and willing to believe that something might be still done, within the kingdom, in support of the monarchy, my husband was unwilling to emigrate. He received many reproaching letters from his relations on that account. As if the loss of rank and fortune, with the necessity of seeking refuge and protection from strangers, was not calamity enough to the emigrants from

my unhappy country, they augment the bitterness of their own condition by reciprocal animosities. The declared enemies of the emigrants have not treated the whole class with less candor than the different descriptions of them have done each other.

Unable any longer to resist the solicitations of some of his friends, my husband determined to withdraw from France, and join the army under the command of the prince of Condé. I had observed him for some days uncommonly thoughtful; but as I knew that he concealed nothing from me that he did not think improper to be communicated, though I was extremely uneasy on account of his present reserve, I abstained from all inquiries, and betrayed no symptom of curiosity to know what he seemed inclined to keep me ignorant of.

He at last said to me one day, after a pretty long silence, and after several sighs which he endeavoured in vain to suppress—"When you married a soldier, my dear Adelaide, you

no doubt laid your account with occasional separation, when the voice of honour, or the duties of his profession, called him from you."

I took hold of his hand, but was unable to speak.

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the resolution he had formed; that it was in consequence of the advice of his friends, and of very serious reflection on his own part, that in fighting under the banners of the prince of Condé, in the present cause, he thought he was serving not only his king, but his country.

I will not attempt to describe what passed from this time until his departure: I must only inform you that my mother was in ill health at that period; so that it would have been cruel in me to have separated myself from her had it been my inclination.

It is also necessary that I should inform you that the Count was a relation of the archbishop of Sens; that, during the agitations in France, for some time before the revolution actually

began, and particularly while the archbishop was prime-minister, the Count was one of the most furious against any kind of concession on the part of government, or the least redress of any of the grievances complained of: at that time he expected power and eminent situations, from a confirmation of the old system, with all its abuses. He declared that nothing ought to be granted to the *canaille*; and he considered nine-tenths of the nation as *canaille*.

After the archbishop was obliged to quit the helm, the Count began to change his language. This alteration was more and more remarkable in the progress of the revolution, until at last the change was so complete, that those whom he had formerly stigmatised as *canaille* he now distinguished by the title of *peuple souverain*. He altered his dress as well as his language, and assumed in both the style of the *sans-culottes*; became a declaimer in the Jacobine society, and cultivated the acquaintance of one Collot d'Herbois, who, from a

despicable comedian, now affected the tone of a disinterested patriot, and has since rendered his obscure name infamous by crimes of the deepest die. By this fellow the Count was introduced to the good graces of Robespierre.

Though every kind of profligacy might be expected in a character such as I have represented the Count's, yet you, my dear Miss Clifford, who are of a country where, as I have been told, nothing of the same nature ever takes place, must be surpris'd at such barefaced apostacy in politics. Though an essential change of circumstances certainly will justify an alteration of conduct, yet, in his variations, if a man always veers to the party in power, his real motive will be clearly seen; and, in England, such a man would be despised, however elevated the situation in which he might be placed. It was not so at this time in France: to such a height had this species of profligacy attained, that no inconsistency of this nature was thought disgrace-

ful ; and some of the meanest of mankind were praised and applauded, while in power, without any regard to the baseness by which they attained it.

The Count had formerly maintained that the power of the crown was too small, and ought to be enlarged ; yet, when he saw it attenuated to a mere shadow, and unable to support its own dignity, or reward its defenders, he joined the ruffian crew who wished to annihilate it altogether. There is no doubt of his having been privy to the arrangements made for the attack on the Tuileries on the 10th of August 1792 ; and there is great reason to believe that he was not ignorant of what was intended at the beginning of September following.

A short time previous to that execrable period, a business of importance rendered it necessary for my mother to go to Havre. Her estate is at no great distance from that town. As a lady of her acquaintance and her steward were to accompany her, and as she intended to

stay only a few weeks, she positively insisted on my remaining with an intimate friend of hers, a most amiable woman, the countess of B——, who invited me to reside with her at Autieul, a village near Paris, until her return.

At Havre my mother heard the first detail of transactions, the horror of which it was not in the power of rumour to exaggerate. She was of uncommon sensibility, and subject to nervous complaints; she was seized with repeated fits of a convulsive nature; even when she had recovered from these, her mind continued unusually agitated. Hearing of an English vessel about to sail, without acquainting any other person, attended by her maid only, she took her passage; and the countess of B—— knew nothing of her departure till she received a letter from the maid, dated Portsmouth. My mother herself was unable to write. She was for some time attended by a physician there. An English nobleman, of the highest rank, whose country residence is

at no great distance from Portsmouth, and who had been acquainted with her at Paris, hearing of the condition she was in, came to that place, and carried her to his own house, where, all possible care being taken of her, she entirely recovered. In the mean time the most unjust decrees were proposed in the furious convention against emigrants. My mother's friends, particularly the princess of P—— and the countess of B——, wrote pressing letters for her to return before a certain day, otherwise, by a severe decree which had now passed, her estate would be forfeited.—She resolved to return accordingly: but being again taken ill at Portsmouth, she was confined to her bed a considerable time, and the day fixed for the return of the emigrants elapsed before she arrived in France.

When it was first proposed in the convention that my mother's name should be erased from the list of emigrants, a violent outcry was raised against it by that party called the Mountain: no explanation was listened to; it

was reprobated as an attempt of shameful partiality to a person of quality, which none but aristocrats and royalists could make.

Pains, however, were taken privately to explain the circumstances of the case to certain leading men of the Gironde party; one of whom renewed the proposal, when the convention were in a less malignant humour. He began by saying, that "he wished to make a motion, which, if it was not carried, would materially injure many worthy patriots and virtuous *sans-culottes*, who were in similar or less favourable circumstances than those of the person in whose behalf he was about to implore the justice of the convention; for he knew that they were no respecters of persons in the distribution of justice; but, in conformity to the motto of *égalité*, which they had adopted, would use the same weight and measure to all descriptions of people."

After a few circuitous flourishes of this kind, before he discovered his object, he recapitulated the circumstances of my mother's

case, and did not name her until the whole assembly was convinced that she had been prevented by illness alone from arriving in France before the day appointed, by the decree, for the return of those French who happened to be out of their native country. There was a loud cry in favour of what was demanded: no member of the Mountain ventured to oppose; and it was as unanimously decreed to erase her name from the list of emigrants, as it had, a few days before, been decreed to insert it.

My mother remained in possession of her estate.

Though I hated the republican principles of the Girondists, yet I never put them on a footing with the sanguinary faction denominated the Mountain. Ever after this period my mother felt a strong sense of obligation to certain leaders of the former party: among those attached to which were some men of great eloquence and very considerable talents, and two of the most extraordinary women

that France has produced since the days of Joan d'Arc.

In the most dreadful situations, surrounded by all that could appal or depress the human mind, ancient or modern annals exhibit nothing surpassing the firmness and heroic elevation of soul with which madame Roland and the astonishing Charlotte Cordé met death.

The united energy of Robespierre and Danton had overturned the party of the Gironde; and those two traitors were at the head of the atrocious gang who domineered over my unhappy country. Each wished to be the supreme ruler; which neither could be, without the death of the other; of course, each meditated the destruction of his associate.

Their reciprocal enmity became more and more apparent; and men began to arrange themselves under those two chiefs, in expectation of the contest which soon after took place,

Camille Desmoulins, whose name you must have heard, as one of the earliest promoters

of the commotions in Paris, was an acquaintance of the Count. Desmoulins was also a writer in favour of the revolution: a vein of pleasantry runs through his works, which might have been agreeable on any other subject; but all kind of jocularity appears hideous, amidst scenes of atrocity and murder. The Count had been confined above a month, on account of ill health, to a villa belonging to him in the neighbourhood of Paris.

Desmoulins visited him oftener than usual, because he was then in low spirits, and deprived of other entertainment. Desmoulins was particularly attached, at this time, to the faction of Danton. He convinced the Count that Robespierre had disgusted the most powerful friends of the republic; that he was losing his popularity daily; that he would be removed soon; and that Danton would be all-powerful.

With such impressions, the Count became extremely vexed that he should be considered as the partisan of a man so near his fall; and

equally anxious to declare himself the friend of one rising to supreme power, he wished to have the merit of declaring for the latter before that event should take place; for which purpose he wrote the following epistle, which he intended to give to Desmoulins at his next visit, that he might deliver it to Danton.

“ CITIZEN DANTON,

“ I HAVE for some time viewed, with the utmost concern, the dangers to which the republic is exposed, by the execrable conduct of a madman. I know no person so able to secure to the nation all the advantages expected from the revolution as he who planned the victory on the glorious 10th of August, and the decisive transactions in the beginning of September following. Your patriotism, and the energy of your character, fix the hopes of all enlightened Frenchmen on you: from you they expect a termination of the present disorders, and of the power of a furious tyrant. The sooner you adopt measures

for those purposes the better ; for, while that monster lives, neither your own life, nor that of any of your friends, can be safe :—I beg you will count me among the most sincere of that honourable class. I am infinitely concerned that ill health renders it impossible for me to give you these assurances by word of mouth, and assisting personally in whatever you may think proper to undertake. In the mean while depend on all my influence, and believe me to be your devoted friend, &c.”

“ ————.”

The Count expected Camille Desmoulins the morning after he had written the above : his old intimate, Collot d’Herbois, called that very evening ; he had been absent from Paris on some of his horrid expeditions. Seeing a letter on the table in the Count’s hand, addressed to Danton, he started.

“ What is the matter ?” said the Count.

“ Do you correspond with that man ?” said d’Herbois.

“It is the first letter I ever wrote to him,” replied the Count.

Collot d’Herbois then told him, that he began his correspondence at rather an unlucky time; and hinted, that if the letter was not of very great importance, he had best delay sending it, because he might soon have reason to wish that he were not known to have any particular connection with Danton.

The Count owned that the letter was of the utmost importance; and, to convince him, broke up the cover and read the contents.

D’Herbois then assured him, “that he had been drawn into an error, which might have had fatal consequences to him; and that Robespierre was surer of maintaining his power now than ever.”

On which the Count observed, “that, in such slippery times, the most cautious people were at a loss to know with what party, or what man, to fix themselves; that, for his

own part, he had always had as much respect for Robespierre as for Danton ; and that, after what he had just heard, he could not help having a great deal more : that the letter he had intended for Danton would do for Robespierre—that he would not need to change a single sentence, but merely put it under a new cover, with a new address ; and he begged of his friend to deliver it the very next day : only it would be first of all necessary to erase the name Danton at the top, and substitute that of Robespierre.”

Collot d'Herbois objected to the erasure, saying, “ it would have an awkward appearance if observed, and might create suspicion : ” he therefore prevailed on the Count to write the letter anew, and to address it to Citizen *Maximilian Robespierre*, and not simply to Citizen Robespierre. “ Great men,” added Collot d'Herbois, “ are subject to weaknesses as well as little men ; and Robespierre himself, though entirely free from many of the weaknesses of humanity, certainly does feel something flat-

tering to his ear, and which he thinks suitable to his character, in the name Maximilian; and therefore likes to have it always precede his surname Robespierre, which I believe he intends, at a proper time, to drop altogether."

"Will not that have an aristocratic appearance?" said the Count.

"Why, perhaps it may," replied Collot d'Herbois, with a grin, for his stern features did not admit a smile; "perhaps it may have that appearance; for nothing is so like an aristocrat, as a democrat, when he comes into power; as nothing is liker a democrat than an aristocrat thrown out of power: but this is only external appearance; the heart is always the same. For example, my dear Count, you are precisely the same man you were when your relation, the archbishop of Sens, was prime-minister."

Without making any reply to this ironical compliment, the Count finished the new edition of the letter, as Collot d'Herbois had

directed: he then stepped for two minutes into another room, and at his return looked for the original letter, that he might burn it. This his friend informed him he had already done during his absence; assuring him, at the same time, that he would deliver the new one to Robespierre the next morning.

All the circumstances of this important interview between those two loving friends, with many others respecting the Count, I learned afterwards from a person from whom he concealed nothing: for though many transactions of this man's life were of a nature to require secrecy, yet he was incapable of it. To him it was like an absolute necessity of life to have some man or woman into whose ears he might pour whatever was dangerous to utter in public, and painful for him to retain.

Soon after this the prediction of Collot d'Herbois was verified; the furious Danton was ensnared, imprisoned, and put to death, by the man whose life he had saved, when he

was accused, and about to be prosecuted by the Gironde.

Robespierre, from this period, was all-powerful : the dreadful use he made of his power all the world knows. My mother and I lived in great privacy, hardly ever going out of the house, and receiving few or no company. Melancholy and dejected through the day, our short slumbers interrupted in the night by the sound of the drum and alarm-bell ; afraid to ask the news in the morning, lest we should hear of the arrestment of some friend or relation, and shocked with the accounts we daily received of fresh victims of cruelty, she determined, at length, to withdraw from Paris, and endeavour to find tranquillity in a distant province of France.

She applied for passports with this intention : every thing was prepared for our journey. The passports were postponed, on I do not remember what pretence. We were at last assured that they would be delivered

the following morning, and on that assurance went to bed in more composure of mind than usual.

About two hours before our common hour of rising, we were alarmed by a loud knocking at the gate of the hotel. Two municipal officers were admitted, and a party of national guards remained in the court.

As soon as my mother was dressed, and could go into the room in which the two officers waited, one of them presented an order for seizing her papers, and carrying her to one of those houses of confinement, of which there were many at that time in Paris, and all over France.

The number of my mother's friends and acquaintance who were in this situation had suggested precaution, and prevented her from being entirely unprepared for this cruel incident: she had nothing to dread, therefore, with regard to the examination of her papers. The officer informed her, that she was ordered into confinement only as a person suspected;

that the order did not extend to me. This intelligence acted on her as a cordial : it evidently raised her spirits, and removed great part of her alarm. The daily executions, and other shocking occurrences, had produced an extraordinary change on my mother's constitution: it had familiarised her with the idea of death, and greatly diminished that nervous sensibility to which she had formerly been subject. Her own personal danger affected her little ; but, whatever threatened me, still gave her alarm.

I begged of the officer that I might be my mother's companion in prison: the man at first objected.

I sunk on my knees, seized his hand, and intreated that I might not be separated from my mother.

She was hurt at this ; and said, with the tone of indignation—" Rise, my daughter ; though we are unfortunate, let us not be abject."

I repeated my request to the officer, the

tears streaming from my eyes. The man was moved; and at last said—"That if it was also my mother's desire, he would take it upon him to indulge us."

Without paying attention to what my mother had said, I pressed the man's hand to my lips with a heart overflowing with gratitude.

Notwithstanding her having at first determined otherwise, seeing the state of my mind, she joined in the request, and we were conducted to the place destined for our confinement.

[I will not hurt your sensibility, my dear Miss Clifford, by a description of this house of sorrow, or of any of the many affecting scenes I witnessed there; but I will give you some account of a kind of examination which took place about three months after my mother was confined, because it proves how completely she was cured of her constitutional timidity, by a continued contemplation of certain objects, the least glance of which

would formerly have thrown her into convulsions.]

We were at breakfast, one morning, when my mother was summoned to appear before three commissioners, who had arrived at the place of our confinement, authorised to examine the prisoners, and report to a committee.

I became pale, and was ready to faint.—
“What is there alarming in this, my dear?” said my mother; “it is what we have long expected, and even wished. What I had most to fear was, lest the circumstances of my case would never have been examined into.”

At my earnest request, I was permitted to accompany my mother. We were conducted into a large room, where the three commissioners sat at the head of a table. I was a good deal surprised when I recognised, in one of them, the person who had taught me to dance. This tended to diminish my terror ;

for, although I had heard that the man had become a furious patriot, and knew that he was much of a coxcomb, yet I also knew that he had a very benevolent heart.

He that was the chief of this commission, with less levity, had all the absurdity of the dancing-master, and was the complete dupe of the hypocrisy and of the falsehoods at this time propagated by Robespierre.

The man began the examination by expressing concern at the cause of my mother's confinement.

She thanked him, adding, "that she was concerned at the effect, but that she had not yet been informed of the cause."

"I thought you had been told, citizen," replied he, "that you were under suspicion of being a suspected person."

"I was so, *citizen*," replied she; "but I never have been told what I am under the suspicion of being suspected of."

"To be suspected is sufficient," said he;

“and all who are in that predicament are under confinement as much as you ; so you have no reason to complain.”

“ I should have been glad to hear that I was the only innocent person in France in this situation,” replied my mother ; “ so that what you have told me can be no alleviation of my sufferings.”

“ Your confinement will not be of long duration,” said the dancing-master.

“ I indulged that hope when I was first arrested,” she replied ; “ but I now have been detained here three months, without any crime having been alleged against me.”

“ You were erased from the list of emigrants by the Girondists,” said the commissioner.

“ I could not have been erased by any other,” replied she, “ as they were the persons in power at that time.”

“ Your connection with that faction, however, creates suspicion against you.”

“ I had no connection with them ; nor

did I ever see any of them until I was summoned to appear before one of their committees."

"I know that to be exactly so," said the dancing-master; "and I have good reason for believing that she had a sincere hatred against Brissot, Gensonné, Kerfaint, and the other members of that committee, previous to the time they struck her from the list of emigrants; but you very well know, brother, that it is difficult to retain hatred against those who do you a good office, even although they should be bad men."

"I know no such thing, brother," replied the chief commissioner,—“No act of kindness to myself or friends would prevent me from abhorring those who performed acts of public mischief.”

"I can assure you," resumed my mother, "that no person could more sincerely abhor the public mischief performed by the Girondists than I did."

"Your having been erased by them, how-

ever, was unlucky, and will be of no service to you now," said the chief commissioner.

"It ought at least to do me no harm," said she.

"The Girondists were all traitors," resumed the commissioner.

"I am sorry for it," said my mother.

"What! sorry for the Girondists."

"I am sorry they were traitors."

"You have reason, citizen," said the first commissioner; "for it is a very dangerous thing, citizen, to have had traitors for your friends."

"It ought not; since it is clear that I had no share in their treason."

"Do you not know that those traitors, the Girondists, intended to restore monarchy?"

"No," replied she; "I really do not know it."

"No!" exclaimed he—"Why all France knows it."

"Since that was their intention," rejoined

my mother, "dethroning the king seems to have been a round-about way of going to their object."

"They were forced into that measure," said he, "and can claim little merit from it."

"Very little, indeed," added my mother.

"But their design was afterwards apparent, by the various attempts they made to save the tyrant."

"Tyrant!" exclaimed my mother, throwing her eyes upwards.

"Yes," re-echoed the commissioner, "a bloody tyrant! who gave positive orders to the Swiss to slaughter the innocent citizens on the 10th of August."

"The same Girondists," continued he, "were equally disposed to have saved the life of the queen, who was of a more bloody and tyrannical disposition, if possible, than Capet himself."

"They were both very bloody-minded tyrants, that is clear," rejoined the other com-

missioner, who had not before spoken, shaking his head and looking to his brother.

“ And the princess Elizabeth!” exclaimed my mother—“ she was also a bloody-minded tyrant—Was she not?”

The commissioner stared.

“ Or, what was her crime?” resumed my mother, with an animation of look approaching to wildness.

The commissioner looked first at one, then at the other, of his brethren.

He who had spoken last said that “ Elizabeth was certainly suspected of being an enemy to the revolution.”

“ She certainly was,” added the chief commissioner.” And then looking to the dancing master, he added—“ Did not you tell me, brother, that one who attended in the Temple informed you that he had overheard her praying very fervently, and that her prayers were anti-revolutionary?”

“ It was you that said they were anti-revolutionary,” replied the dancing-master.—

"I only told you that the man had said she was overheard praying for the *reformation* of the king's enemies."

The two commissioners looked at each other without speaking.

The person who sat at the bottom of the table, and acted as clerk, had formerly been a priest, and had distinguished himself as a casuist: he now opened his mouth for the first time, and said, with a solemn tone, "By *reformation* she meant *destruction*."

"Ay, she certainly meant destruction," rejoined the first commissioner.

"And if the prayer should ever be granted," resumed the clerk, "it is more likely to be according to the *meaning* than the expression of the petition."

"Most assuredly," said the chief commissioner.

"And you will be pleased to observe," added the clerk, "that such prayers being granted, according to the meaning of the petitioner, involves the destruction of the repub-

lic: its best defenders would, according to her prayer, be cut off like the great Marat; for, by the king's enemies, she must have undoubtedly meant Robespierre, and many other patriots, all perfectly known to him to whom the prayers were addressed."

"Most assuredly," repeated the commissioner.

"It follows, therefore, as a necessary consequence, that the princess Elizabeth's prayers were anti-revolutionary," continued the caufist, "and might have been the cause of overfetting the revolution: and to overfet the revolution by dint of prayers is juft as treasonable as by any other means: for, when the revolution is overfet, where is the difference?"

"None! none!" exclaimed the commissioner.

"That being the cafe," faid the clerk, "it is clear that the princess Elizabeth was a bloody-minded tyrant, and merited death."

"Ah! the monster," faid my mother.

The dancing-master was the only one of the commissioners who heard this expression, which was almost drowned by a profound sigh, and by my mother's bursting into tears as she uttered it.

This man understood some of her answers better than his brethren, and had been uneasy during the examination, lest she should say something that would increase the danger of her situation: to prevent which he rose, saying "that the prisoner seemed indisposed, and that he imagined no other questions needed be put to her." The other commissioners acquiesced. My mother and I withdrew. When we were alone she gave vent to the indignation she had with difficulty suppressed during the examination.

My mother became solicitous lest the constant confinement should affect my health: and as my unwillingness to leave her hindered me from availing myself of the permission I had of going abroad so often as I might, she contrived to give me little commissions, which

required to be executed at a considerable distance, that I might derive benefit from the fresh air and the exercise. One day she found a pretext for sending me as far as the village of Passy, with a message to a lady who lived in the house which your countryman, the celebrated Dr. Franklin, had formerly inhabited.

During my absence, the Count, for the first time since her confinement, called on my mother. He affected great concern, and expressed the most ardent wish to have it in his power to serve her; hinted that her greatest danger proceeded from an idea that she had been intimately connected with, and favoured by, the Gironde party; that he had been using all his influence with the committee of Public Safety to prevent the effect of that idea; and that he was not without hopes of succeeding. She heard him with coldness, and expressed her thanks with reserve, because she was ill able to dissemble, and strongly suspected his professions of good-will.

He then said, " that, independent of her connection with an odious faction, another circumstance prejudiced her cause still more in the minds of the men at present in power; and, he was very sorry to add, might, if not removed, endanger her life; and that was her daughter's being the wife, not only of an emigrant, but of one who served under the prince of Condé."

" It seems quite unnecessary to remind me of those circumstances," said my mother, " since they cannot be altered."

" If I were not persuaded that your influence could alter them," resumed he, " my tenderness for you would have prevented my mentioning them." He then proceeded to inform her, " that it was, by the laws of the republic, absolutely impossible for my husband ever to return to France without the immediate loss of his life; and that it was equally impossible for me to leave France without forfeiting the succession to her estate: that those two impossibilities rendered a divorce

highly expedient; that divorces had been at no preceding period so easily obtained as at present; and," added he, "to give you the most convincing proof, not only of my being able to obtain your acquittal and freedom, but also of the sincerity of my friendship to you, notwithstanding my being sensible that it was by your influence alone that what I am going to propose failed formerly, yet I now declare, that I am still willing to unite my family with yours by espousing your daughter, as soon as a divorce can be procured from her present husband."

"And you expect," said my mother, her eyes flashing with indignation, "you expect that I shall influence my daughter to agree to such an execrable plan?"

"If you do not prefer remaining in prison, and the forfeiture of your fortune," answered he.

"Know, wretch," replied she, "that I would prefer the guillotine!"

"Perhaps you may in that be indulged, madam," replied he, and rushed out of the room.

After this my mother despaired of obtaining her liberty, and did all she could to persuade me to leave her to her fate. "They are determined, my dear child," said she, "to murder me, on some pretext or other; perhaps, without troubling themselves about a pretext, they will take my life, that my estate may be confiscated. You cannot prevent their cruelty; but it will be a great consolation to me to know that you are beyond their power; I beg, therefore, that you will adopt the plan I have formed for your escape out of this land of horror. If, contrary to my expectation, my life should be spared, I will find means of informing you, and we will meet when it can be done without danger; but it is a very great aggravation of my misery to know that you remain in the power of such barbarians."

These, and other arguments to the same purpose, though often urged, did not prevail. I should have considered it as sacrilegious, and that it would put me on a footing with the barbarians she execrated, to abandon my mother in such circumstances.

The name of the dancing-master who had acted as commissioner was Vilotte. In his youth he had been distinguished for expertness in the practical part of his profession: being now somewhat advanced in life, he valued himself most on the theoretical, in which alone, he said, true genius consisted. He had invented several ballets that were much admired. Had he confined his genius to his own profession it would have been better for him: but, a little after the commencement of our miserable revolution, he turned it to politics. He said "that fortune had committed a *faux-pas* in making him a dancing-master; and hoped, as many others did, that the revolution would raise him to the situation he thought he deserved." He had formerly had

the highest respect for counts, marquises, and dukes, by whose protection he had acquired a comfortable independence : he now began to think that the greater part of them were devoid of talents, and unfit for the offices they held ; and, what was still a greater mistake, he believed that he himself possessed the capacity in which they were deficient. He became an admirer of that canting enthusiast Robespierre ; he attended clubs, studied political pamphlets, and declaimed against the abuses of government, at the meetings of his section.

Most of Vilotte's old protectors laughed at his extravagances. My mother, who had known instances of his benevolence, was so vexed at the thought of a well-disposed man rendering himself ridiculous, that she sent for him, told him what she had heard, and gave him some good advice. Previous to this, Vilotte, who always spoke of my mother as the person who had first introduced him into genteel business, and as his principal benefac-

tor, often called at our hotel. But, after this piece of advice, we saw no more of him, until we were summoned before him in the quality of a commissioner.

It then appeared, that though my mother had given him credit for a little more understanding than he possessed, she had a just opinion of his disposition. All the political madness of his head did not suppress the worth of his heart. In the calamitous state we now were, he had many opportunities of proving the sincerity with which he had been attached to our family, and how desirous he was of being of service to us.

He found various pretexts of visiting the house of our confinement. The *avowed* object of his visits regarded some other business; but he never left the house without seeing my mother or me. By him we were ascertained of what we had always suspected, that my mother's arrest proceeded from the Count, though he took pains to make it be believed that it originated elsewhere. But in general

the news Vilotte brought to us was of a consolatory nature. He assiduously endeavoured to raise my mother's spirits, by hopes of being in a short time set at liberty; and he neglected nothing that was in his power to make good the hopes he raised. He informed my mother that she had less reason than ever to dread the Count's malice, because the channel of his interest with Robespierre was through Collot d'Herbois, who was at that time absent from Paris.

This friend of the Count was one of the most infamous of that infamous band who domineered at this time in France, and rendered that country odious through Europe. The rich and flourishing town of Lyons has particular reason to execrate this Collot d'Herbois, and his fellow commissioner Couthon. I have seen both these miscreants. No two men could be more unlike in person and countenance, none more congenial in rancour and cruelty.

The former had the look of mild ingenuity.

The sound of his voice was plaintive. He had lost the use of one half of his body by a paralytic stroke. From the expression of his countenance, from the modulation of his voice, from that sympathy with affliction which people in high prosperity and vigorous health are too often devoid of, and which fellow-sufferers are supposed to have in an eminent degree, Couthon was the man, among ten thousand, to whom a person under the pressure of misfortunes would have applied for relief: the most robust savage that ever was habituated to slaughter, the most callous inquisitor that ever questioned men under the agonies of torture, was not more blood-thirsty and more unrelenting than Couthon.

There was nothing that could mislead the judgment in the outward appearance of Collot d'Herbois—all his deceit lay in his heart. His countenance was frightful. Children shut their eyes, and screamed at the sight of this man. His head sustained a frightful exuberance of bushy hair, black as tar, and stiff as

the bristles of a hog ; his complexion was cadaverous ; his features haggard ; his eyes sanguine : he looked very much like a villain and murderer ; and he was a much greater villain and murderer than he looked like.

It is wonderful that one should have ever thought of being an actor who disgraced the profession by his looks, by his character, and by his want of talent. It has been said, that his rancour against the citizens of Lyons originated from their having had the good taste to hiss him as often as he appeared on their stage. Be that as it may, the barbarities exercised on the inhabitants of that devoted city by Couthon and Collot d'Herbois are unparalleled in the records of tyranny : their thirst of carnage rendered them impatient of the slowness of guillotines ; they projected mines of gunpowder to blow up prisoners by whole housefuls ; they pointed cannon, loaded with grape-shot, to tear in pieces multitudes of —.

[I ask pardon, my dear Miss Clifford, I per-

ceive that I distress you. Familiarised as I have been to scenes of oppression and cruelty, I forget that I am speaking to an English woman ; an inhabitant of that happy country where no such scenes exist, where the power of the crown is limited by the constitution, where law alone is supreme, and, with a commanding voice, tells the monarch as well as the people, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther*. Such is the account that my husband has often given me of Great-Britain. I am pleased to believe that it is just ; and, from sentiments of general benevolence, as well as in gratitude for the generous reception which so many of my unfortunate countrymen have met with in this island, I do most sincerely wish it may long continue.

I have been led astray by the mention of those two monsters. They had returned from their bloody expedition a considerable time before my mother's examination ; and at that particular time Collot d'Herbois had again left Paris.

[I now return to my narrative.]

Our friend Vilotte was a native of Arras, a great admirer of Robespierre as a patriot and orator, and proud of him as a townsman. Robespierre's patriotism and eloquence were well suited for imposing on that depth of understanding which poor Vilotte possessed. Robespierre showed some attention to him in return for his admiration ; and on this I relied for my mother's freedom, and I laboured to inspire her with the same hope. You will be, perhaps, surprised at this, considering the frivolous character of Vilotte ; but you cannot conceive, my dear, from what a very unpromising soil sprigs of hope will shoot up in the breasts of the unhappy : besides, Vilotte was not now a frivolous character in our eyes ; he had shown attachment when our other friends had shrunk away ; and this attachment remained unloosened by the spirit of party, which raged so universally, which is often so fatal to friendship, and from which Vilotte himself was far from being free.

This worthy creature's hopes became stronger every day, of which he did not fail to inform my mother : at last she was convinced that she was to be set at liberty within four or five days at farthest. She wrote to several of her friends and relations, that they might expect to see her in her own hotel very soon.

While we were in this state of mind, Vilotte called one morning at the house of our confinement. My mother and I were sitting together—I heard the sound of his foot as he advanced through the passage. In that dismal abode we were accustomed to few sounds but those of sorrow : it was no wonder, then, that I could with certainty distinguish one which had always been the forerunner of comfort.—“ Oh ! my dear mother,” said I, springing from my seat, “ here comes Vilotte ! he brings the order for your freedom.”—“ Let us receive it with thankfulness and moderation, my child, if he does,” said she.

When Vilotte entered, he had a kind of smile on his countenance ; but it did not

seem natural: the good creature strove to maintain a cheerful look while he informed us, that "he was certain that my mother would obtain her liberty very soon, though *not so soon* as he had expected; that Robespierre had been indisposed, which had occasioned delay; that he was so much occupied, since his recovery, that it was difficult to obtain access to him;" but Vilotte added, "that he had received a message from him, importing that my mother would be set at liberty in a short time, though the precise day was not yet fixed."

In spite of all these palliatives, this was a severe disappointment to both my mother and me: Vilotte perceived it in our countenances; for neither of us spoke. He repeated every thing which he thought would afford us comfort; saying, "we might rely on the assurance Robespierre had sent him; that Robespierre was too great a patriot not to be sincere; that none but courtiers were insincere: he was therefore convinced that

he should have the happiness of bringing us good news at his next visit."

My mother said—"That what gave her most uneasiness was, that no particular time had been ever fixed; that if she were assured of obtaining her freedom on a certain day, it would be a great comfort, though the day were distant."

Vilotte answered—"That though he was determined not to return until the day of her freedom was decided on, still he was convinced he should wait on her soon."

Those who have longed, with impatient expectation, for some event on which they imagine their happiness depends; who have been convinced that the expected event will not be prolonged beyond a particular day, and when that day arrived have been disappointed, will have some idea of our anguish: but unless they have been shut up for months in a prison, and pined from morning to night for fresh air, free exercise, the verdure of the fields, and the faces of friends, they will not have a full

notion of what we felt on this occasion. I really thought nothing could be more vexatious: yet I affected to bear it cheerily, that it might sit the more lightly on the mind of my mother. I plainly perceived that she assumed the same behaviour, and for a similar reason: in these mutual attempts, perhaps, neither deceived the other; yet our efforts to *seem* more cheerful than we were enabled us to support the disappointment better than we should otherwise have done.

Five or six days after this, Vilotte paid us another visit: we were sitting together, and heard him approaching as before. My mother and I looked at each other the moment we distinguished his tread; but neither of us spoke. I heard her sigh as he was entering the room. Neither of us turned our eyes on him for a few seconds; but when we did, his face seemed gay, his smiles were unconstrained. He announced, with an air of complete conviction, that he was now certain that my mother's freedom was determined

on : his friend had seen Robespierre ; and the order for that purpose would be given in due form, on a particular day, which he named, and which was at the distance of three weeks.

In this interval, a friend of my father, who had borrowed from him a considerable sum of money, found means to let my mother know, that he would immediately pay a certain portion of the debt into the hands of any person whom she should authorise to receive it. This person lived at the distance of above three hundred miles from Paris, which at this dreadful period he was unwilling to enter. My mother had much occasion for the money, and thought nobody so fit to receive it as myself.

An old servant of my father, of the name of St. Jean, who had been established in a shop by his assistance, and was one of the national guards, was engaged to conduct my maid and me on this expedition. As soon as the necessary passports were obtained, the

maid and I set out in a post-chaise, and the man attended on horseback. My father's friend received me with the greatest kindness, and paid me the money. By a slight indisposition, I was under the necessity of remaining several days at his house longer than I intended. As soon as I was able, I returned in the same manner I had set out. During the whole of this journey, my thoughts were engrossed with anticipations of the happiness I should enjoy on the day of my dear mother's enlargement. My greatest vexation, in my late indisposition, proceeded from the fear of not being able to reach Paris before it should take place. I now rejoiced in the expectation of arriving there on that very morning.

Not choosing to drive through Paris, on my arrival, I quitted the post-chaise at the barrier, intending to walk to the house of the man who had accompanied me, whose wife had formerly been my maid. Our way was through the Place of Louis XV. A great

crowd was assembled ; and we were informed, that it was to see the execution of some persons condemned by the bloody tribunal then sitting. I turned with precipitation ; and, by a circuit, avoided a place which was almost the daily scene of such affecting spectacles.

In my way to the house above mentioned, I called at a shop to purchase some confections which I knew my mother was fond of. While I sat in the inner room, till the things I ordered were ready, two persons entered the shop: one of them said, “ that madame de ——— had died with the utmost serenity.”

I did not perfectly hear the name the man pronounced ; but, indistinct as it was, it darted instantaneous terror to my heart. He proceeded to say, “ that he had come directly from the Place of the Revolution, and that he had seen her guillotined.”

“ Who did you say ?” asked the woman of the shop.

He answered, with an audible and distinct

voice, "I already told you, madame de —, the widow of governor de —."

At the mention of my father's name, my maid, who was present, uttered a shriek, and I lost all recollection.

The following day, when I began to recover from that state of stupefaction into which the dreadful news had thrown me, I found myself in bed, in the house of a widow who lived near the confectioner, in whose shop I had been first taken ill.

I had cause to regret the insensibility from which I awoke to a full sense of my misery.

The state I continued in, for some time after the return of my recollection, I will not attempt to describe.

When I was able to listen to a detail of the circumstances which preceded the dreadful event, I was told, "That only a few days before my arrival at Paris, and when my mother still relied on repeated assurances of her being to be set at liberty on the day appoint-

ed, a fresh accusation had been made against her, of her having emigrated to England in June 1792; that she had not returned to France on or previous to the day fixed by the decree of the convention; that she had been, on *false pretences*, struck out of the list of emigrants; by a committee of federalists and traitors; and, finally, that she corresponded *with*, and had sent money *to*, her son-in-law, who actually served in the army of Condé.

“On this accusation she had been hurried before the revolutionary tribunal; had undergone the form of a trial, where those circumstances were sworn to; had been insulted, in gross terms, by the wretch who presided over that court of assassins; and afterwards dragged to the scaffold, where she had suffered with the resignation of a saint, with another lady of rank, who was executed at the same time, by a mistake in the name, which those murderers would not take the

trouble to investigate, though a different victim was intended."

[Why should I afflict your sympathising breast, my dear young lady, with an enumeration of my sorrows?—

I must not omit to inform you, however, that I received an anonymous letter soon after; the purport of which was, to acquaint me, that the Count was my mother's secret accuser, and that it was by his influence she had been put to death. I am well aware that letters of this kind are generally the offspring of cowardice, in conjunction with malice: it would have made no impression on my mind, therefore, if I had not had reason to suspect the same from other sources of intelligence.]

Several weeks after this dreadful event, I was told, one morning, that a gentleman wished to see me. As he announced himself an old friend of my family, you may conceive how very much I was surprised when

the Count entered the room. I could not help screaming as soon as I saw him.

He begged that I would be composed, assuring me of his sympathy.

I cried, "that I wished for none of his sympathy—that I could have no sympathy with him."

He declared, in the most soothing tone, "that he was ready to render me every service in his power;" adding, "that it was in his power, he hoped, to be of most essential service to me."

"Can you restore my mother?" exclaimed I.

He started, became pale, and remained for some moments silent: then, recovering himself, he said—"That he most sincerely lamented the fate of my mother; that he, as well as her other friends, had entertained hopes that she was to be set at liberty, at the very time that the sad event took place:—that she had enemies unknown to him."

"They are not unknown to me," cried I;

and I was going to utter all that rage and despair prompted, when the mistress of the house entered the room. The Count rose; and having recommended me, in very affectionate terms, to her care, he withdrew.

La Brune was the name of the woman into whose house I had been carried, from the shop where I was first taken ill. Her husband had received obligations from my father, for which she had retained sentiments of gratitude; and, after her husband's death, she let lodgings. She had behaved with all tenderness to me, from the moment I had entered her house.

When the Count was gone, she informed me, that he had been accidentally passing when I was carried from the confectioner's to her house; that he had frequently called, during my illness, to inquire how I was, and had recommended that all possible care should be taken of me.

"The monster!" exclaimed I; "it was

owing to him that my mother was accused."

The woman was shocked at hearing this, and expressed the utmost indignation at such perfidy; but, on inquiring into my reasons for believing it, she endeavoured to show me that they did not by any means amount to certainty.

On various occasions, afterwards, this woman took pains to persuade me that there was little probability of the Count's having been guilty of the wickedness I suspected him of. One day, in particular, after deploring the helpless situation in which I was, she repeated the desire he had expressed of serving me; and concluded, that for those, and various other reasons, I ought to receive his future visits with more complaisance.

"I expect no more of his visits," said I; "but, in case of his calling again, I beg you may shut the door against him."

Madame la Brune told me, "that she durst not venture to provoke a man of the Count's

influence; that if she did, it would no longer be in her power to serve me, which she had the most sincere desire to do. She begged I would reflect on my forlorn situation: that I was not free from danger, not only on account of my being the wife of an emigrant, but of one who was in arms against the republic. She represented how very much I stood in need of that protection, without which every body was in danger of being carried before the revolutionary tribunal. "Innocence, my dear lady," added she, "is not always a security."

"No," answered I; "nothing but guilt is; and for that reason I desire no security."

On my uttering this, which I did with emphasis, I was surprised to see madame la Brune change colour, and burst into tears.

The Count was introduced at that very instant.

Madame la Brune rose; and, as she went out of the room, looked at me in a very affecting manner.

I had already been moved by her tears: I conceived this look to be a request that I should not provoke him, lest it should bring her to trouble: this reflection prevented me from withdrawing with her. I remained in the room, with the determination of behaving to him with calmness and civility.

He renewed his offers of service and expressions of concern. I bowed, without answering. He introduced some general and indifferent subject of conversation—I joined in it with constrained calmness. He at last took his leave, with a repetition of his hopes to be able to serve me.

At one time, I had some suspicion that madame la Brune acted in concert with the Count; that perhaps I had been carried to her house by his direction. In this I did her injustice: she knew nothing of him, previous to his inquiries about me. She was afterwards informed, that he was a friend of Collot d'Herbois, and had influence with Robespierre. The woman was of a com-

passionate disposition, and had the most sincere desire of being useful to me. She thought the Count's protection was powerful, and was concerned at seeing me reject it: she thought the dangers of the times justified certain means of procuring safety, which were not justifiable at other periods. She herself had a protector, in a man who was a member of the military committee, and highly considered by Robespierre. Unable to make great sacrifices for virtue, she respected those who could, and was extremely susceptible of remorse. This was the source of her blushes at an expression of mine above mentioned.

In some conversations I afterwards had with this woman, I became fully convinced of her good-will towards me: this was also confirmed by the whole of her behaviour.

She spoke with gratitude of my father, with tenderness of my mother, and with horror of some who had the government at present in France; but begged that I would,

in appearance at least, moderate my dislike of the Count, until I should find myself more out of his power.

I had long before been abandoned by all those who, without any sentiment of friendship, had been in the habit of calling themselves my friends. After the death of my mother, the terror of being suspected kept many from me who had a real affection for me, and would willingly have subjected themselves to considerable inconveniences, but not to danger, on my account.

[This, my dear young lady, is the utmost we need expect from the generality of those who are called friends; though, amidst the multitude of crimes that the revolution has given birth, instances of virtue, heroism, and exalted friendship, have appeared, which do honour to my country and to human nature.]

The Count continued his visits: they became more frequent: his professions of friendship were more and more warm. When

he seemed inclined, however, to make any particular declaration, I always eluded the subject. He could not conceive that any thing could prevent me, in my present situation, from embracing an offer of marriage from him, except some religious scruple. He suspected that I might think a divorce, however legal, could not dissolve the obligation of marriage, which is a sacrament.

I might have had such scruples, even although I had loved the Count; but, in truth, I disliked the man to that degree, that the idea of being his wife filled me with as much horror as that of being his mistress could possibly do.

The Count was fully persuaded, however, that all my hesitation (for he thought me hesitating) proceeded from my doubts of the efficacy of the divorce, in giving me a right to marry a second husband during the life of my first.

To remove those doubts from my mind,

he fell on a singular expedient, which it will be requisite to develope a little circumstantially.

The Count was acquainted with a monsieur and madame Cochon, whose history is somewhat curious :—Mr. Cochon's parents were in opulent circumstances : they intended him for the military profession ; and did all in their power, by giving him a suitable education, to render him fit for it. They never had any doubt of its being agreeable to his own inclination ; for he had, from his early youth, affected the military dress, even in the fiercest style. But there were two circumstances, in the life of a soldier, to both of which young Cochon had an utter aversion ; namely, danger and fatigue. When his parents told him, therefore, that it was time for him to choose a profession, to their surprise, he informed them he preferred the ecclesiastical.

Though surprised, his relations were not very averse to his choice ; for some of them

had such influence as might soon procure him church-preferment. In due time, therefore, he became a priest.

This took place a little before the commencement of the revolution; but he found, soon after, that the profession he had adopted, for no reason but to enjoy ease and avoid danger, exposed him to persecution, and more danger than he had shrunk from.

His regret for this mistake was excessive: he thought the best way of repairing it was, to renounce the priesthood; which he did accordingly; giving, for his reason, that his conscience would no longer permit him to assist in carrying on a farce, contrived, from the beginning, to delude and cheat the people. And to prove that he was in earnest, and that he might ingratiate himself still more with the promoters of the new opinions, he determined to marry. The person he selected for this honour was a rich widow: her maiden name was Soupire. She had, from her youth, been of a studious dis-

position ; and, by the time she had arrived at her twentieth year, she was very deep-read in romances, particularly those of a refined sentimental nature. The lady herself was exquisitely sentimental ; continually sighing for something or other. *The tear of sensibility*, to use a favourite expression of her own, was continually trembling in her eye.

Her own personal distresses, she thanked heaven, she was able to support as became a Christian ; but she acknowledged, that the misfortunes of her friends she could not endure with equal firmness and resignation.

With regard to the poor, she lamented that her own narrow circumstances did not permit her to bestow on them much pecuniary relief ; but she was bountiful in good wishes, and in the allotment which she thought ought to be made for them by the rich. She often avowed, that the pleasure of giving was far more exquisite than that of receiving.

Nothing surprised her so much, as that the

great, who indulge in other luxuries, should have so little taste for that most exquisite of all luxuries, relieving the wants of others.

A young man of some fortune, and of a benevolent disposition, who had been a little attracted by this lady's looks, which were engaging, was so charmed with her sentiments, that he proposed marriage to her. This proposal was so very convenient to her, that she waved that timid reluctance, and all those delicate scruples, which it was in this lady's character to have displayed, had she not been afraid that the lover might have changed his mind during the exhibition.

The young man, in whose favour she had thus overcome her delicacy, was intimately connected in friendship with some of the leaders of the Gironde party. They were arrested a short time after his marriage. When the violence against them came to its height, he was advised to withdraw from Paris, and keep himself concealed. He followed this advice, and afterwards escaped to Germany;

from whence he wrote pressing letters to his wife, begging that she would join him as soon as she could. She was taking measures for that purpose ; for she did not know what else to do ; and had often declared, that to be absent from the husband she loved was worse than death. The night before she was to have set out, a wealthy citizen of Paris, and the friend of Robespierre, made love to her.— Though she acknowledged that she was proud of the good opinion of so distinguished a patriot, yet she also expiated on her virtue, and the duty she owed her husband, notwithstanding his political errors. The patriotic citizen represented that her virtue needed be no obstacle to his happiness, because he could, with the greatest ease, procure for her a divorce from her husband, who was an emigrant, and already dead in law. This argument was enforced by an offer of an ample jointure, and a considerable sum of ready money, at her own disposal.

The patriotic citizen prevailed ; and, after

the divorce had been obtained, and the new contract of marriage drawn out, sealed, and signed, in due form, he became the lady's lawful husband.

He did not survive his happiness long ; the man died in consequence of excess at an entertainment given by Robespierre's brother to a select party of his friends. The Count's acquaintance, citizen Cochon, had ingratiated himself so much with all that party, by abjuring the priesthood and ridiculing Christianity, that he had been invited to this entertainment. He saw the man carried speechless from the feast, and conceived great hopes of his death ; for, having before been struck with the figure of his wife, and informed of her circumstances, he thought an alliance with her would answer all his views.

Some short time after the death of the husband, therefore, monsieur Cochon paid a visit to the afflicted widow. He told her, " that, as he had lost one of his most valued friends, he came to mingle his tears with hers, which,

perhaps, would afford some degree of consolation to both." She expressed no aversion to the experiment, and they met pretty frequently, to mingle their tears accordingly. She acknowledged to him that this ceremony afforded some alleviation to her sorrow, particularly as, though monsieur Cochon was a much stouter man, yet she found a considerable resemblance in his features to those of her deceased husband. On that hint, monsieur Cochon spoke, and declared his passion with such a warmth of eloquence as might have melted a harder heart than this lady's seems to have been.

All those particulars I learned from madame la Brune, who was a relation of mademoiselle Soupire, had kept up a certain degree of intimacy with her through all her variations, and understood her character perfectly.

In the account I have given of this woman (continued the marchioness), I have used, as often as I could recollect them, the very phrases of madame la Brune, who never spoke

of her cousin without turning her affectation into ridicule.

The Count had been acquainted with madame Cochon when she was mademoiselle Soupire. At one time he was thought to be rather fond of her. Disgusted by her affected airs of sensibility, he had abstained from visiting her. He had known her a warm and voluble friend of the Gironde party, while it was in power. He had known her its bitter enemy, and the most eloquent of Robespierre's admirers, when the Gironde party was over-set: he was fully convinced that she was equally prepared to be the advocate and admirer of whoever should overturn the government of Robespierre, and bring him to the guillotine. With whatever indulgence or partiality the Count might view this disposition in himself (for it was precisely his own), yet it appeared to him hideous in another; and he had the most consummate contempt for madame Cochon. He imagined, however,

that she was a likely person to remove all my scruples with respect to my sueing for a divorce and marrying again.—“As this lady, who passed for a woman of refined delicacy, had so far yielded to the voice of reason and prudence as to sue for a divorce from the man she had married from love, and had afterwards taken a second husband, during the life of the first, notwithstanding her love for him, and then a third, who had been a priest, in the middle of her mourning for the death of the second, what hesitation could remain with me after so bright and striking an example?”

The Count, therefore, cultivated the acquaintance of monsieur Cochon more than ever; renewed his attentions to his lady, who had always retained a certain degree of regard for him, and on whom he soon prevailed to promote his views with all her power. She visited her relation madame la Brune very assiduously, and took much pains to be on an intimate footing with me.

I was not long in perceiving her aim and

suspecting her motive. It was not in my power to avoid seeing this woman; but I concealed my suspicions of her. I allowed her, with little interruption, to expatiate on the good qualities of the Count; his intimate connection and great influence with the men in power; and on my good fortune, in having so valuable a friend. She drew his portrait in the most shining colours, and varnished it with all her art, to render it still more agreeable. This had a different effect from what she intended; the varnish corroded the artificial tints, and left the likeness all its natural disgusting appearance of corruption.

She was deceived by my silence and passive attention: she informed the Count that the moment for being listened to by me with favour was arrived.

At his next visit he found madame la Brune with me. She seized a pretext for leaving us: he began the old subject of his ardent desire of serving me—his extreme sorrow for my helpless situation. On my faintly thanking

him, he said, "that endeavours were making for restoring to me my estate, and threw out some insinuations of his own influence with those on whom that measure depended; that the greatest obstacle was my being considered as the wife of an emigrant; that he, however, had a prior claim, having declared his passion before my husband paid his court to me. He hinted the great facility which there was with respect to divorces; and that, though he found it difficult to obtain the restoration of an estate to a person who was considered merely as his *friend*, yet he was persuaded it would not be refused to his *wife*."

I froze at the word. I am convinced I became pale. How he construed my appearance I know not; but he dropped on one knee, seized my hand, and renewed his request in direct terms. At his touch I shuddered—All caution forsook me—I drew my hand hastily from him, with an exclamation of aversion.

He started up with fury, and, in a me-

nacing voice, admonished me not to provoke him too far.

“The worst you can do,” said I, “wretch, cannot surpass your perfidy to my mother.”

He left the room quite furious.

Madame la Brune entered.—She had overheard all that passed.—She lamented the danger I was in, and blamed my rashness.

“To screen myself from danger,” said I, “would you have me plunge into guilt and infamy?”

She burst into tears, and remained silent.

I was sorry for the uneasiness I gave this good-natured woman, and said every thing I could think of that could be soothing to her.

Vilotte, the dancing-master, called on me a few days after this scene. He seemed greatly agitated. He informed me, “that he had just learned that an accusation was to be brought against me; that he understood it originated in the Count. He advised me to destroy any letters I might have from my husband, or any paper whatever, that would strengthen suspi-

cion of my corresponding with emigrants."— He added, "that I was to be arrested the following day, and confined in a house belonging to a creature of the Count, where I would be entirely in his power."

This last circumstance terrified me more than all the rest. I proposed leaving my lodgings directly, and trying to find refuge and concealment in the house of a poor woman, whose distresses I had occasionally relieved, and with whom I was not known to be acquainted.

Vilotte approved of this; but desired me to delay till the dusk of the evening, when he would himself conduct me; and, in the meanwhile, begged that I would take the precaution he had mentioned.

When I informed madame la Brune of this, she showed the strongest marks of sorrow, and, afterwards, of indignation; she poured forth execrations against the Count: at last, after a minute's pause, she said, "Perhaps I may still be able to save you from the power

of this villain." She ordered a coach to be called, assured me that she would return in a short time, and hurried into it without farther explanation.

I had no paper that could be thought dangerous, but several that I did not wish those wretches to peruse: these I immediately threw into the fire, and then employed myself in packing up what necessaries could be conveniently carried to the house where I intended to go.

Madame la Brune returned two hours before the time when I expected Vilotte.—I heard her finging a gay air as she came up stairs. She knew the state of anxiety in which I was, and wished to announce to me, as soon as possible, that there was nothing alarming in the news she brought. As she opened the door of my room—"You have nothing to fear, my dear madam," cried she; "you may remain here in perfect security."

She then informed me, that "she had been

with her friend and protector of the military committee; had related to him my story, which he was in part previously acquainted with, and had fully convinced him of the Count's intention to gratify private malice and revenge, under the pretext of public zeal; that while she was enforcing this with all the warmth which her regard for me prompted, a servant had entered, and informed him that Collot d'Herbois waited in another room; that her friend had directly withdrawn, desiring her to wait his return; that, when he did return, he had assured her that he had taken effectual measures for my safety, desiring her to inform me that I was in no danger of being arrested, and had nothing to dread from the enmity of the Count."

When Vilotte arrived, I informed him of these circumstances, at which he expressed great satisfaction, saying, "that though he had not the honour of knowing the deputy in

question, he was well acquainted with his high reputation; and that the assurances he had given madame la Brune were completely to be relied upon."

I remained, accordingly, at her house, undisturbed by fear of being arrested, or by any more visits from the Count.

I afterwards came to the knowledge of the means by which my security was obtained.

The Count had cultivated an intimacy with St. Juste, a member of the convention, and a great favourite of Robespierre. He was a young man of great intrepidity and considerable talents. After having said that he was a favourite of Robespierre, it is unnecessary to add that this St. Juste was a most consummate villain.

He had recommended citizen R—— (for that was the name the Count had assumed) in so particular a manner, that *he* also was considered, at this time, as a kind of favourite of

Robespierre. The Count was so vain of this honour, that he neglected his old friend, Collot d'Herbois; and a coldness had taken place between them. The latter was piqued at the Count's neglect; and he harboured besides some degree of jealousy, on account of his growing favour with the dictator. This was the state of Collot d'Herbois' mind when he called on madame la Brune's friend, as has been mentioned. The latter was acquainted with the Count's ancient intimacy with Collot d'Herbois, but knew nothing of the new coldness. D'Herbois' business was to request a situation for a relation of his, who was an engineer. Immediately after granting this request, madame la Brune's friend told the other that the Count had conceived ill-will against an unfortunate woman, in whom he was interested, had a plan for having her arrested and confined, on pretences that were unfounded, and begged, as he himself was unacquainted with the Count, that d'Herbois

would prevail on him to drop all thoughts of that nature.

“ You may depend upon it,” said d’Herbois, “ that it shall be done—I’ll go to him immediately.”

“ You are sure of persuading him ? for I am a good deal interested in the business,” resumed the other.

“ Absolutely sure,” replied d’Herbois.

He immediately waited on the Count, told him he was sorry to understand that he had intentions of accusing me, and desired he would give up all thoughts of it, and leave me in tranquillity.

The Count expressed surprise at his interference, said there was great ground for the accusation, and refused to comply with his request.

Collot d’Herbois said, with an air of menace, “ I would advise you not to push that matter any farther.”

The Count, with heat, told him “ that he

would mention it to Robespierre himself that very day: adding, "How will you answer to him for interfering in favour of a person under such a load of suspicion as that lady is?"

"How will you answer to him," replied d'Herbois, "for the letter you wrote to Danton a little before his arrest and execution?"

"That letter was burnt," replied the Count.

"When I told you so," rejoined Collot d'Herbois, with an ironical grin, "I did not recollect that I had, *from mere absence of mind*, slipped it into my pocket instead of the fire: I was surprised, therefore, to find it among my papers this morning."

The face of the Count, red-hot with rage the instant before, became cold and pale at this annunciation; he perceived that his life was in the power of a man he had neglected and braved, and with whose vindictive temper he was well acquainted. This reflection, after he had stood a moment motionless, began to shake his whole frame: when he at-

tempted to speak, his teeth chattered in such a manner that he could not articulate a syllable.

After having for some time enjoyed his terror, "I see," said Collot d'Herbois, "that you are a little discomposed at this intelligence; you may rest assured, however, that *your friend* Robespierre shall not see your kind epistle to *his friend* Danton, until I hear that the lady in question is arrested, or that you make some attempt to disturb her."

When the Count had recovered himself, he assured d'Herbois "that he might have obtained what he required of him by a single word; but that he had been impelled to affect reluctance merely by the abrupt and peremptory manner in which the request had been made; that he must be sensible that there was no man on earth for whom he had so great an esteem; that, as for the lady, she might rely on never being disturbed by him; that very probably the reports he had heard of her corresponding with emigrants were

false ; and that, if so, he would be very happy to do her all the service in his power ; and that Collot d'Herbois might rely on his conducting himself in that business, as in every thing else, conformably to the friendship he had long felt for him."

D'Herbois answered with declarations of friendship equally sincere ; but, in the spirit of his original profession, as a buffoon, he could not refrain from embracing the Count a little too much *à la pantalone*, which convinced the Count that the other intended the reverse of what he said : that idea engrossed his thoughts,—the guillotine was constantly before his eyes ; and, as Robespierre was the person from whose immediate mandate he dreaded death, he thought of nothing, from that moment, but how to overturn his power ; and, having discovered that some other of Robespierre's old friends, wretches who had been his accomplices in so many murders, were, from a suspicion of his intention to murder them also,

now his enemies, the Count joined in their plots.

Their conspiracy was hurried into execution by the intemperance of Robespierre himself. This man had so long sported with the lives of his countrymen, without meeting with resistance, that he lost all prudence or sense of danger ; and, after having been obeyed implicitly in the murder of many thousands of innocent people, he lost his own life by threatening that of a few execrable villains.

While the contest continued, the Count kept aloof. As soon as it was known that Robespierre, Couthon, St. Juste, and Henriot, were massacred, he appeared in the front rank of the victors, and was among the very loudest declaimers against the cruelties of Robespierre, whom he now represented as the greatest monster that ever the earth had produced. Barrère and Collot d'Herbois attempted to play the same game, but with less success. Tallien unmasked the first ; and the Count was indefatigable in his endeavours to send the second

to the scaffold. This man, however, who had deserved the wheel in a thousand instances, escaped with banishment.

A few days after Robespierre had been dragged expiring to the scaffold, amidst the execrations of a multitude who worshipped him two days before, I received a visit from madame Cochon. In the days of Roland and the Girondists, this woman had always spoken of Robespierre as a madman: after their destruction she acknowledged that she had mistaken his character, for she then saw that he was a most disinterested patriot, and the only man in France who had sufficient energy for conducting the republic through the rocks, quicksands, and hurricanes of the revolution. Madame Cochon thought herself wonderfully eloquent, and dealt much in hackneyed metaphor. At this visit I found that she had resumed her original opinion of Robespierre, with the addition of his being the most mischievous and cruel of madmen. With a view to acquire favour with those who had

destroyed him, and gain importance, she gave out that the following memorandum was inscribed in his pocket-book:—*Madame Cochon, née Soupire. Guillotine.*

When she repeated this assertion to me, in the presence of madame la Brune, who was convinced of its falsehood, the latter could not help saying—"It is a great pity that the pocket-book, which does you so much honour, could never be found."

"Ah!" cried madame Cochon, a little too hastily, "he burnt it before his execution."

"It is wonderful, then," replied madame la Brune, "how you came to know that such a memorandum had ever been in it."

"It is by no means wonderful," said the incorrigible hypocrite, "since Providence has ordained, that plans of murder, as well as murder itself, are often brought to light in a miraculous manner; and I do assure you, my friend, that I was doomed to death by that monster Robespierre!" She said this in a doleful voice, and seemed ready to cry.

“Let not the tear of sensibility tremble in your eye,” rejoined madame la Brune: “but recollect that it was the monster himself, and not you, that was guillotined.—Do not cry, my dear madam, your head is still upon your shoulders.”

I have observed, my dear Miss Clifford, (continued the marchioness,) that vain people are exceedingly blind to the ridicule they excite. This woman was a very great hypocrite; she had all the desire possible to deceive, but her vanity put it out of her power. It was obvious that madame la Brune sneered at her: yet she continued to flourish about her sensibility a considerable time before she touched on the real business for which she had come: at last, however, she spoke about the Count.—“She was exceedingly sorry that any misunderstanding had taken place between him and me; to her knowledge he had the most sincere respect and friendship for me; wished to be of use to me; and then expatiated on the need that

every one, particularly a young woman in my situation, had of protection ;” and finished by saying “ that the Count was intimately connected with those who had overturned Robespierre ; that he had been acquainted with all their plans, and was likely to continue in trust and favour with them : and, even on the supposition that they, like others, should be turned out of power (she added), that he possessed such address, and such an accommodating versatility of conduct, that she knew no man who stood a fairer chance of acquiring the favour of their successors, however opposite their system might be to the measures he now supported ; that the friendship and protection of such a man was of great advantage at any time, but particularly at the present moment.”

Having urged those considerations at some length, she took her leave, in the hopes, no doubt, that they would have the effect she intended. She assured me, as she was going, that she would have the pleasure of waiting on me again very soon.

I afterwards was informed, on better authority than madame Cochon's, that the Count really was in considerable credit with those in power, but that madame la Brune's friend was under confinement. On this, my dread of being persecuted by the malice, or, what I dreaded still more, by the love of the Count, returned in full force.

I began, therefore, to arrange matters for changing my lodging; but I concealed my purpose from madame la Brune, not from any want of confidence in her, but that she might be enabled to declare, *with truth*, that she knew not of my going, nor where I was.

Madame la Brune suspected my intention, and complained of me for harbouring it. I acknowledged my having resumed my former plan of concealing myself with the old woman, and that I had not mentioned it to her, on purpose to save her from being suspected by the Count of any previous knowledge of my leaving her house; for I knew that she had given him reason to expect that

she would inform him, in case I should ever think of taking that step.

She said, "that she was convinced of the prudence of my immediately trying to conceal myself; but she questioned my being able to remain long so at the old woman's, where I should also be miserably accommodated. She therefore advised me to leave Paris." She owned, "that the Count had exacted of her that she should give him notice in case I thought of quitting her house; but that he had no right to make such an exaction; that he could not have made it for any honest purpose; and therefore she would pay no regard to it. As for the Count's suspecting me of assisting you to escape," said she, "that he will do at any rate; for villains are always suspicious; but, thank heaven!" added she, "they are to be deceived as well as other people; and I have no scruple in deceiving them; being persuaded, that an over-delicacy in that point gives them an advantage over honest people which they have no right

to. After you are gone, therefore, I shall have circumstances arranged, and a story prepared, that will tend to remove his suspicions of me more effectually than if I had really known nothing of the matter, and been unprepared to deceive him, as he deserves to be."

I did not think madame la Brune's reasoning unexceptionable, more than her conduct in other respects ; for it was impossible not to see that she was the mistress of the deputy with whom she had so much influence. What surprised me was, to find that, notwithstanding this latitude of reasoning and behaviour, she was scrupulously observant of certain religious ceremonies, of far less importance ; an instance of which I will mention, because it is a strong proof of the inconsistency of sentiment on religious subjects, even in characters by no means devoid of sagacity in other matters.

One evening that I passed with her alone, after a good deal of conversation, in which

she expressed a full belief in all the doctrines of the church, I could not help saying, "With so firm a belief in all those things, how can you maintain the conduct you do in a certain point?" She answered, with the most perfect *naïveté*, and seemingly unconscious of saying any thing singular—"Because, to believe costs me nothing; but to change my conduct, in the article you allude to, would cost me a great deal."

The whole of her conduct towards me, however, was uniformly generous and friendly; and appeared the more so, because, at the very time that she was exposing herself to danger, and taking so much trouble on my account, she was under great concern and dread for the safety of her own protector.

I determined to follow her advice in leaving Paris; and, after much reflection, could think of no place where I could be more secure than in the house of that person who had paid up the debt due to my father. The domestic who had formerly attended me on

the journey was at this time with one of the armies. I sent, therefore, for my never-failing friend Vilotte ; informed him of my purpose ; and he readily agreed to accompany my maid and me to the place of our destination. By his means we procured passports, under false names, and accomplished the journey happily, though not without a variety of dangers and risks, which I shall omit to enumerate. I was received in the kindest manner by my friend and his family. After having remained unmolested with them a considerable time, I received a letter from madame la Brune, in which she informed me, “ that madame Cochon had called two days after my departure ; had been surprised and irritated, on hearing that I had abruptly left the house without giving her notice ; that the Count himself had called the day after ; that he had raged like a fury ; accused her of being accessory to my escape, and had abused her in very gross terms ; that this had furnished her with a pretext for refusing to an-

swer any of his questions, by some of which she would have been very much embarrassed: that he had afterwards tried coaxing and bribing, to prevail on her to acquaint him with the place of my concealment: that she had not altogether seemed deaf to these arguments; but, after having convinced him that she had known nothing of my going away, and had with all diligence been endeavouring to discover where I was, she had given him a cue for finding me out,—which cue," added she, "*will direct his researches far enough from the place you are in.*"

About a fortnight after this, I received a second letter from madame la Brune, to acquaint me, that she had just learnt, from the Count himself, "that he had heard of my former journey; had some suspicion where I actually was, and proposed to send certain agents to discover whether his suspicions were well founded: that she, on her part, had done every thing she could to turn him from his purpose; but, as she was not cer-

tain of having succeeded, she gave me this notice, that I might be on my guard."

This alarmed me so much, that I slept out of my friend's house the night on which I got the letter. By the very next post I received another, in which madame la Brune informed me, "that she had waited on the Count the day after their last conversation, and had told him, that, in consequence of having written to a friend at Lille, to give her information of the arrival of any person at that town who answered to the description she had given of me, she had received an account of such a person having just arrived there: that, on this information, the Count, as she wished, had immediately set out for Lille." Madame la Brune added—"On his arrival there, he will be told, that the person he is in search of had gone to St. Omer's some hours before his arrival: he will of course proceed to St. Omer's; and, when he gets there, he will find that nobody knows what is become of the fugitive." She concludes, "that she

gives me this information, that I may have time to make the arrangements necessary for removing entirely from my present place of concealment, and finding another, where I could remain in security ; for she was persuaded, that as soon as the Count should return to Paris, he would resume his former suspicion, and set out for the place where I then was."

In consequence of this information, I resolved to go to Geneva. By the means of the excellent man with whom I had lodged, I performed this journey, and was received, with my maid, into the house of a watchmaker, with whom my friend had long dealt, and to whom he had been of material service in the way of his business. His family consisted of his wife and two young children.

With this family I lived in the most private manner : they were worthy people. As I was pleased with their conversation, and was provided with whatever books I required, I seldom wished to go abroad ; but my kind landlady, being afraid that too much

confinement would injure my health, prevailed on me sometimes to take a walk with her. As we crossed the Plain-palais one day together, I saw, at some little distance, two men in French uniforms, one of whom struck me as having a resemblance to a fellow whom I remembered to have seen attending the Count. I turned back immediately, begging my companion to attend me home as fast as possible. Being near the gate which opens to Plain-palais, we soon entered the town, and hurried home with all expedition. I informed my landlord and his wife of the cause of my alarm: they endeavoured to encourage me with the hope that I had not been noticed by this fellow, or that he might not be the person I took him for: those hopes were diminished that same evening; when my landlord was informed, that a French soldier had been inquiring, at the shop opposite to his house, "Who the lady was who lived with him?—How long she had been at Geneva?—When

she intended to leave it?—and other particulars.”

This account terrified me exceedingly, because of the dread and subjection in which the inhabitants of the once free and happy city of Geneva were held by the tyranny of France. When I demanded of my landlord, “Whether I could depend on the magistrates for protection, in case any attempt were made against my liberty, through the influence of France,” he said—“It would be best not to risk it.”

This man, though in other respects a man of sense and worth, had been a favourer of our revolution. He thought the French republic would, from sympathy, support the independence of Geneva. I knew his sentiments; and therefore repeated, with surprise—“Risk it! Does the independence of Geneva run any risk from the republic of France? Can it countenance any attempt against general or individual liberty?”

He shook his head, and made an answer

flattering, my dear miss Clifford, to your country.—“ I am now convinced,” said he, “ that power in republics, as well as in monarchies, has always a tendency to be oppressive; and that liberty, as well in monarchies as in republics, has a tendency to be turbulent: power and liberty, therefore, are seldom on good terms in either. I do not recollect any instance of their being combined, and limited so as to produce the general happiness of the people, in any republic, nor in any monarchy, except that of Great-Britain, since the revolution in that country in the year 1688.”

He then told me, “ that he had a friend, advanced in life, who had been so disgusted with the dissensions and tumults of which Geneva had been the scene since our revolution, that he had taken a small house in a very retired and romantic spot near the village of Cluse, where he lived with his sister, a lady who had long before been disgusted with mankind in general; not, indeed, on

account of a revolution in the state, but in the affections of one man, who had proved faithless to her :” adding, “ that they hardly ever saw or corresponded with any person, except when he himself paid them a visit, or had occasion to write to the brother.” To this person’s house my landlord offered to conduct me, assuring me of a welcome. I agreed to the proposal with eagerness. We set out the following day ; and, at my arrival, I received from this gentleman and his sister the welcome I had been promised.

Before I left Geneva, I had written to my husband, who was still with the prince of Condé, expressing my desire of passing to Germany, as soon as I could know where he wished me to reside ; and desiring him to address to me, under cover, to my landlord at Geneva, who would deliver his letters, or transmit them to me, wherever I might be.

While I waited with impatience for an answer to this letter, I received one from madame la Brune, in which she informed me,

“ that before the Count returned from his expedition to Lille and St. Omer’s, she had prepared a very plausible story to amuse him, and remove any suspicion which might, naturally enough, have arisen in his mind, of her having intentionally deceived him ; that, though she had never seen a man so vexed as he was at his disappointment, and at the thoughts of having for ever lost me, she had appeared to be as vexed as him ; that she was not quite certain, however, of having entirely removed his suspicions ; that his passion for me was as violent as ever ; that he talked much of the happy situation in which it was in his power, as well as inclination, to place me ; that he would forget all the trouble I had given him, and enable me to live in opulence, uncontrolled, and entirely according to my own taste.” Madame la Brune observed, “ that his insisting so much on these topics looked a little as if he still suspected that she knew where I was, and would inform me of all he said.”

[This woman you must perceive, my dear, is exceedingly shrewd and cunning; but, though I must ever think on her with gratitude, and should be happy to render her any proper service, I should like her better if she had less cunning, and more true wisdom: cunning is very apt to grow into knavery, whereas wisdom tends to make people honest.]

The most interesting part of her epistle was the postscript, which acquainted me with her having just learnt that the Count had left Paris, and that he was gone to Chambery, where a certain person who had been long looked on as a creature of his acted as a commissioner.

This intelligence alarmed me so much, that I immediately sent a peasant with a letter to my friend the watchmaker at Geneva, begging his advice, and informing him that I had heard this commissioner spoken of as a man devoid of principle, and devoted to the Count; so that, if he should by any accident

discover where I was, I might, by the authority of the former, be arrested on the slightest pretext, and fall into the power of the latter.

The worthy Genevois saw my danger in the same light I did myself, and he was as eager to relieve me from it as if he had been my father. His answer was, "that the safest place, in his opinion, that I could retire to was Vevay; that he would write to a trusty person of his acquaintance, who lived there, to be ready to receive and accommodate me immediately on my arrival;" and he desired me to meet him early in the morning of the day, after receiving his letter, at a certain village, from whence he would conduct me to the Lake of Geneva, where a boat would be ready to carry my maid and me across to Vevay.

It afterwards appeared, however, that all my suspicions, from the time I had seen the fellow in the Plain-palais, had been well founded: he *was* one of the ruffians whom the Count maintained, and always had at his

command. This fellow had been sent by the Count from Chambéry to Geneva, for the express purpose of getting some accounts concerning me: he had remarked my suddenly turning from him, and hastening within the gate; and had afterwards made inquiries, which confirmed him in the notion that I was the person he was in search of. He had given this information to the Count, who had directly come to Geneva, in the hopes of carrying me off by some means or other from that city, on his arrival there; and, finding that I had left it, he had taken pains to discover where I had gone, in which he succeeded; and, finally, had applied to the commissioner, who, subservient to all his views, had given an order for arresting me, on the pretext of my carrying on a correspondence with the enemies of France.

After every thing was arranged for our departure, according to the directions of my friend the Genevois, while I was conversing after supper with my worthy host and his

sister, in the expectation of setting out next morning, a servant, entering the room abruptly, told us, "that the house was surrounded by a party of French soldiers." You may conceive what a thunder-stroke this was to me. My landlord, whose natural steadiness of temper was fortified by the study and practice of philosophy, seeing the state in which I was, said, "Fifty to one it is a mistake, founded on false information; they happen daily."—"The person who commands the party is placing sentinels around the house; he seems a civil man," said the servant to his master, "and he desired me to tell you, sir, that you need not be alarmed, for he has orders not to injure you in the least."

"I am glad that the party is under command," replied our landlord aloud: "in that case, as we are all innocent, *none of us* need be alarmed."

As the officer was entering, I turned my back to the door, from the dread that he

might be accompanied by the Count. Addressing my landlord, he said, "I am sorry, sir, that my duty obliges me to disturb you in the least; but my orders reach not you; they only regard a lady who lives in your house."

I cannot describe how I was affected, when, struck with the voice of this officer, I turned suddenly, and recognised the very person who had accompanied me on my journey from, and return to, Paris, when I went for the money.

He seemed as much astonished as I was. "Good Heaven!" said I, "St. Jean, are you come to arrest me?"

"To arrest *you*!" exclaimed he, with the accent of horror, shaking his head. He then paused, looked around, shut the door, and repeated, "Arrest you! my dear madam, never, never, never."

"Who then are you come to arrest?" said I.

"My dear lady," replied he, "let me recover my senses;" and, after looking first my

landlord, and then his sister, steadfastly in the face, he said to me—"Am I safe to speak?"

"I will answer for this gentleman and lady as for myself, St. Jean," said I.

"Will you?" replied the good fellow; "then I will speak freely.—In case you should escape from this, do you know of any place in which you could be concealed?"

"I was preparing to set out for such a place when you arrived," said I.

"Would to Heaven I had fallen and broken my leg when I was hastening hither," said he.

"I believe you had best inform this good man of the whole of your scheme," said our landlord, addressing me.

I did so directly.

St. Jean listened with attention; and when I had finished,—“It will do,” said he, rising with an air of satisfaction. He then desired to be excused, saying he had some dispositions to make; but would return in a short time.

“Are you absolutely certain of this man’s fidelity?” said the sister, as soon as he left the room.

“As much as of any man alive,” said I.

“That may be,” said the sister with a profound sigh; “but no man alive is to be trusted.”

I recollected what the Genevois had told me, that this lady had in her youth been deceived by a man; and I had perceived that a long course of intervening years had not plucked the rooted sorrow from her breast.

“Do you not perceive, my dear sister,” said our landlord, “that the time for distrust is past; we are in the man’s power; the least appearance of distrust now would only irritate.”

St. Jean returned. We were surprised to see him accompanied by the footman and the two maids, the only servants belonging to the house. We were alarmed when he desired that they should be shut up in a room, and the key delivered to him.

This extraordinary request was immediately complied with. After which, St. Jean, shutting the door, addressed us as follows, in a low voice.

“ You have acquainted me with the plan formed for the marchioness’s escape previous to my unlucky arrival. I will now inform you of the measures I shall take for its being still carried into execution. The orders I have received are general, and simply to arrest a lady living with this gentleman :—little did I imagine that this lady, the daughter of my benefactor, was the person. I will run any risk to secure her escape from the danger with which she is threatened ; but I hope it may be effected without much. I have informed the party under my command, that the lady we were in search of is in this house ; that it would be foolish to think of moving her until the morning. I have placed sentinels before and behind the house. At one o’clock precisely there will be a soldier at the back-door, whom I believe I might trust ; but it

is unnecessary, for I shall myself walk around the house at that hour, on the pretence of observing whether the sentinels do their duty. I shall then bring the man at the back-door to the front of the house, and there amuse him and his companion with repeated and minute orders, until the marchioness and her maid shall have full time to withdraw by the back-door, and to get at a distance from the house, so as to arrive at the place where the person you mentioned attends to accompany them across the Lake. On the morning," continued St. Jean, "I shall be under the necessity of conducting this lady," pointing to our landlord's sister, "to a small town between this and Chambéry, where the person who brought me the commissioner's orders waits my arrival. He will no doubt be out of humour when he sees the mistake; but he must impute it to the want of precision in the orders he gave me, and he must of course release the lady directly."

The sister did not seem very fond of this part of St. Jean's plan ; but when the brother declared his intention to accompany her, observing, at the same time, that it would afford her satisfaction the rest of her life to reflect, that, by a small piece of inconvenience, she had been the means of saving a person she esteemed from very great distress, perhaps from death, she agreed.

I could not help expressing a fear, however, lest St. Jean should be suspected of having connived at my escape ; “ for, after all,” said I, “ the soldiers who are here will declare that there were *two* ladies.”

“ The soldiers, my dear madam,” said St. Jean, “ can declare no such matter ; they did not know that there was so much as *one* lady here until I informed them, after I went last out of this room. That they may not be made acquainted that there are two is the reason of my having used the precaution of locking up the only persons who can give them that information.”

We all admired the prudence and address of St. Jean. After some consultation, it was thought expedient to liberate the man-servant, whose silence and discretion his master declared he could rely on; and who was highly useful, at the appointed hour, in conducting my maid and me to the place, where we found the punctual Genevois in waiting. This worthy man had arranged every thing to my wish; and he never quitted us, until he had seen us established safely at Vevay.

I soon after had the pleasure of hearing from him, that our host and his sister had both been set at liberty a short time after the party had conducted them to the town from whence they set out; that St. Jean had showed that he had adhered literally to his orders, and that no blame was attached to him. But I was informed, at the same time, of what gave me much inquietude, though I had all along suspected it in part, that the Count was in Savoy; that the order for arresting me originated in him; that he re-

mained convinced that the information he had received was true ; but that he had been persuaded by St. Jean, that I must have left the house before his arrival with the party ; that St. Jean had been ordered to Italy ; and that the Count continued his researches for me with redoubled assiduity.

All this intelligence my friend the Genevois had received from St. Jean, before he set out on his march. I should have directly left Vevay, had I not expected every day to hear from my husband, or had I known where I could be in more safety.

A short time after this I was again on the point of falling into the power of my persecutor. From that supreme misery I was saved by the generous interposition and intrepidity of one who, for reasons with which I am unacquainted, wishes not to be mentioned. When I shall know that those reasons no longer exist, I shall acquaint you with the particulars.

The behaviour of all the English with

whom I have had any communication, since my arrival here, confirms the opinion I have long entertained of your nation : and one acquaintance in particular, which I have made in London, I shall ever consider, my dear miss Clifford, as one of the most happy incidents of my life.

LETTER XXXV.

The COUNTESS DOWAGER of DEANPORT to
JAMES GRINDILL, *Esq.*

DEAR SIR,

London.

I ALWAYS thought Mordaunt of a generous disposition; but as he is, at the same time, both a younger brother and a man of fashion, I never could have imagined that he would have been either able or willing to have advanced such a sum as would enable you to clear off your debts, and leave Munich in a creditable manner. Men of pleasure seldom have cash sufficient to answer their own purposes; and I hardly ever knew any of them, except mere novices, at their first affecting that character, who were willing to accommodate a friend with money, whatever his urgency might be. But Mordaunt of late has, I understand, been more a soldier than a man of pleasure.

I am happy it was in my power to

remove the chief obstacles that existed in this country to your return.

Your old friend, Brumton, stood out more obstinately than any of your creditors. He had heard that your relation in Wales was in an ill state of health ; and was convinced that, by his death, you would be very soon in a condition to pay him the whole debt. Varnish, my attorney, is a precious fellow : he found means to persuade Brumton that your relation was out of danger, and that it was a very doubtful matter who would be his heir when he died ; on which that affectionate old friend, losing the hope of receiving his whole debt, came into the same terms as your other creditors.

When he shall hear, however, that the Welchman has not only relapsed, but also that he is attended by a physician of your recommending, he will consider you as in possession of the estate, and curse the hour on which he agreed to the composition.

As I had been for some time extremely

impatient for your arrival in London, you may imagine what a disappointment it was to me when I understood that, immediately on landing, you were under the necessity of setting out for Wales. I am sensible, however, of the propriety of that measure, and shall now acquaint you with the circumstances that made me peculiarly desirous of seeing you in town.

In one of your letters from the continent there is a hint which shows that you had some idea of my having a scheme to promote a marriage between my son and Miss Moyston. I do not give you credit for a vast deal of penetration on that account. You must naturally have imagined that I could have no other design the moment you heard that I cultivated an acquaintance with her and her aunt. On what other account could I have submitted to the penance of visiting and being visited by such women? You can have no notion of their vulgarity.

Knowing that they were engaged with a

party to go to the play, I seized the opportunity of sending them an invitation to my box at the opera the same night. The niece had the good sense and good manners to remain with her party; but the hideous aunt actually broke her engagement, and came to my box. I was under the necessity of sitting next her the whole night, in the view of a crowded audience. You have seen the woman, and know the Gothic style in which she dresses. I declare that Azor was the least frightful monster of the two. You who know my aversion to be seen in public with any one of an unfashionable appearance, and have been witness to my shrinking from my own relations and old companions for no other reason, may have an idea of what I suffered from the ostentatious familiarity of this woman; for she continued smiling, and nodding, and whispering to me, during the whole performance. The truth is, that while she seemed to be delighted with her situation, and eager to catch the eyes of the spectators, I was in

agonies ; yet I endeavoured to support my spirits with the thought, that, through my sufferings, my son might obtain for his wife the greatest heiress in England. Little do children consider what a tender and affectionate mother is capable of enduring for the lasting good of her offspring !

While I persevered in my attentions to these two women, I often spoke to them of my son, who at this time was visiting his estate in Ireland : I described him, you may believe, in the most flattering colours, taking particular care to suit my description to what I conceived to be the taste of the niece. One day, being alone with the aunt, I determined to open my views to her ; but while in preparation for what I intended, I was enlarging on my son's fine qualities, the old lady anticipated my purpose, exclaiming—"What a charming match would such an accomplished young nobleman make for my niece !"

I received the hint graciously, but with becoming dignity.—"My sincere friendship

for her, the high opinion I had formed of her amiable niece's character, were great inducements, and would remove many obstacles."

As I had not the assurance to pay the least compliment to the young lady's beauty, I thought it necessary to dwell the more on her good sense, her charming humour, and amiable manners, though I strongly suspect that her understanding, temper, and beauty, are much on a level. The aunt assured me that I had a just notion of her niece's character; that she had a great deal more wit than she was willing to display, and a taste for magnificence, which would render her an ornament to the nobility.

In a short time we came to an understanding on the subject, for which I had brought about the meeting; and the business was settled, as far as depended on the aunt and me.

I soon discovered that the niece was as impatient to be a countess as the aunt was to be more intimately connected with me.

When my son arrived from Ireland, I made

frequent mention of Miss Moyston in his presence. This naturally turned the discourse on her fortune ; and I took care that some person in the company was sure to make the observation—that she was the greatest heiress in the island. I was in hopes that this would have excited a desire in my son to be introduced to the young lady ; but I discovered that his mind was at that time engrossed with the thoughts of purchasing a mare which had struck his fancy, and he could attend to nothing else. As soon as I understood that he had succeeded in obtaining the mare, I again introduced the subject of Miss Moyston, and gave him a pretty circumstantial detail of her fortune, having previously informed myself of the various forms in which her immense property is secured. I concluded the narrative with the phrase appropriated for women about to be married, ‘ that she had every qualification requisite for rendering the marriage state happy.’

"She is very handsome, of course," said he.

I answered, "that I was sure that great beauty could not be reckoned among those requisites by a man of his discernment, as he must be acquainted with so many instances of its having a contrary effect."

To this observation he deemed to assent, by the habitual bow which he gives for an answer when he has no other ready.

I prevailed on him to accompany me to the aunt's house, where he was presented to both ladies: but I blamed myself, as soon as Miss Moyston made her appearance, for not having delayed the presentation until the evening; because she certainly is one of those young ladies who show to greatest advantage by candle-light.

I must do my son the justice to confess, that, though the smile which he had prepared for Miss Moyston was converted into somewhat of a stare when the young lady appeared,

yet he soon recovered from his surprize, and, on the whole, conducted himself fully as well, during this first visit, as I had expected.

As he continued the same behaviour when he met them at my house, and sometimes visited them at their own, I flattered myself that every thing was in good train for the accomplishment of my wishes. But something like backwardness, on the part of my son, has appeared since; of which I will give you an account in my next; for I am now obliged to dress for lady Faro's assembly, from which I would not, on any account, be absent this particular night, as I have had a foreboding, ever since I rose this morning, that I shall be a very considerable winner.

You will laugh at my foreboding, and impute it to superstition; though I really never am superstitious, unless when I am in an ill state of health. My foreboding, at present, is founded on what you have often told me is the only just basis for betting, namely, *calcu-*

lation. I have been a constant loser these four last nights; and, as it is at least ten to one against any person losing five nights running, it is clearly the same odds in favour of my winning to-night.

Adieu !

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Countess of DEANPORT to the Same.

London.

I AM sorry to begin by informing you, that, in spite of the odds against losing five nights running, I lost again last night. There is something unnatural in this; it looks like enchantment. You may say what you please, but I am convinced there is a great deal in feats. I am determined to be more attentive to this point in future.

I mentioned in my last that some degree of hesitation respecting the object I am so much set on had appeared on the part of my son. He abstained of a sudden from visiting Miss Moyston; and when she came to visit me was generally engaged elsewhere. When I spoke to him of the impropriety and imprudence of this conduct, he pretended that it was entirely accidental; that he really had

been engrossed with business of importance of late. I asked, "what business could possibly be of so much importance to him as that of securing his domestic happiness for ever, by uniting himself to Miss Moyston;" adding, "that after a very careful inquiry respecting the fortunes of all the heiresses in England, I could assure him that she was the best wife he could get by fifty thousand pounds at least."

He replied, "that the abatement which ought to be made on account of her looks, and other articles, would reduce her fortune to a level with that of some other heiresses."

In reply to this, "I desired him to recollect of how very little importance the beauty of a wife was to a husband; and cited some of his own acquaintance, who, having been touched with the looks of girls without fortune, had made what are called love-marriages; and who, in the space of a few months, were as completely indifferent about their wives' beauty as any man could be who

had married a woman of fortune without any regard to her looks." To this he made no answer; though, from his countenance, I thought my remark made some impression on him.—Whether it proceeds from indolence or vacancy (for I need not attempt to conceal from you that lord Deanport has not a great variety of ideas), he seldom engages in an argument; and often, when he is entirely of a different opinion from those who endeavour to persuade him to any measure, he says nothing against it: so that many have imagined they had brought him round to their way of thinking, because he remained silent, which he did merely to avoid the fatigue of reasoning.

On the present occasion, however, I thought him a little affected by what I said; and, with a view to gain him entirely, I added, "That unquestionably his fortune was very considerable; that his English estate, in particular, had been greatly improved by the pains I had bestowed on it

during his minority; but that he still owed a great sum: that, by a marriage with Miss Moyston he would be freed at once from that burden, be in possession of a large sum of ready money, and a vast additional fortune in land, which, by an accession of influence with administration, would enable him to provide for his friends and dependants at no expense to himself." I also hinted, "that the additional thousand pounds which he had added to my jointure, before so shamefully small, would no longer be felt; but that he would even be able to double it, and still have more than twice as much to spend as he could afford at present."

You have had but too many proofs that lord Deanport knows nothing of true generosity: what I have heard you remark, my dear sir, is certainly just, that he takes after the contracted character of his father. I hardly ever knew him perform one generous action from the genuine movement of his own heart:

every thing of that nature he ever did was prompted by me, or some other person; even the addition that he made to my jointure was obtained by the repeated suggestions of those whom I employed for that purpose; and he granted it at last more to relieve himself from importunity than from any inclination to oblige.

After throwing out the hint above mentioned, I told my son, "that I had heard (which I really have) that lord Sordid, son of ———— had of late paid particular attention to Miss Moyston."

This roused him more than any thing I had hitherto suggested. "Do you imagine," said he, with a tone of contempt, "that I have reason to dread lord Sordid as a rival?"

I told him, "that he certainly had not, provided he paid nearly the same attention to the lady which that lord did."

"Less attention will do," said he, and left me with an air of great self-sufficiency.

His want of due attention to the lady is my only fear; for, in point of person and countenance, my son has much the advantage of lord Sordid, as indeed he has of most young men of fashion. I do not recollect one who, in those articles, can be thought his superior, except Mordaunt; and he derives his superiority more from that graceful frankness and captivating ease of manner, which all the others attempt, but none have caught, than to the exclusive beauty of his face and figure. My son, on the contrary, to a supercilious address joins a repulsive look; these, with his natural indolence, being opposed to lord Sordid's fawning assiduity, alarmed me so much, that I took pains to impress both Miss Moyston and her aunt with an unfavourable idea of lord Sordid. I represented him as the slave of avarice, and commented at large on that passion as the most debasing for himself, and the most tormenting to a wife, that a husband could have. "It is

more teasing to a wife," added I, "than even jealousy; for that may be lulled, or the effects of it eluded, by a woman of address; but all the cunning of Hermes, and all the soporific power of his pipe, are not sufficient to divert the attention, or shut the watchful eyes, of a miser."

Here the aunt observed, "that though she was not acquainted with Hermes, yet she was fully convinced that nothing could be more mortifying to a woman of spirit than to have a miser for her husband."

This poor woman, I understand, was not a little controlled in her expenses during the life of her husband; which made her enter very feelingly into my abuse of lord Sordid: indeed I could hardly exaggerate, it is almost impossible to represent him as more a miser than he is. Additional fortune would not prevail on him to augment his expense in a single article; it would, in reality, instead of increasing his enjoyment, render him more

miserable, by increasing his dread of losing it. The loss of fifty pounds gives more pain to a miser than the gain of a thousand affords pleasure.

Yet, though all the world plainly sees that avarice is this noble lord's predominant passion, he himself is so little sensible of it, that he is as ready to condemn in others the immoderate love of money as either you or I.

Indeed, I have often had occasion to observe, that the blindness of mankind to their own personal failings is truly astonishing.

As I see many advantages from my son's marriage with Miss Moyston, I am impatient to have it concluded before he becomes sufficiently acquainted with her to take so strong a disgust as would be quite insurmountable. I therefore beg, my dear sir, that you will write to him on this interesting subject: you always had a great deal of influence with him. State the advan-

tages of the match in the strongest point of view, and banter him on the weakness of permitting any reluctance he may feel respecting the young lady's person to weigh at all in his mind against an object of so much greater importance.

I remain, very truly, yours,

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER XXXVII.

The COUNTESS of DEANPORT to the Same.

London.

I WILL tell you, frankly, that you have disappointed my expectations, in your letter to my son. I see the reason of it: you had a favour to ask. You know my son's aversion to be importuned, particularly on a subject which you think is disagreeable; and therefore you almost entirely elude the topic I recommended to you, lest your insisting on that might indispose him from granting the other: but you must be blind indeed, if you are not sensible that, in promoting my son's marriage with miss Moyston, you greatly promote your own interest. When he shall be in possession of her fortune, and the extensive influence attending it, you know enough of the unconquerable indolence of his character not

to be certain that all this influence would naturally fall into other hands. Into whose hands do you think it would fall? and for whom would that person use it?

The very first effect of it would be, to recompense you for your late disappointment, by placing you in parliament. I am sensible that a seat would be highly convenient for you at present: indeed, it is the only protection which several very worthy gentlemen of my acquaintance have against the insolence of tradesmen.

But, over and above that security, I am persuaded, that when you are in parliament, and known to have influence with my son, your next application to the minister will not be followed by the same cold neglect that your last was.

Your not being a speaker does not account for it: very few of his adherents are of use to him in debate; and, were it not for the immense power of his own eloquence, and the ingenuity of two or three others, his

measures would often remain undefended. Yet so much wealth has been accumulated by some of the poorest of his retainers, and such rank obtained by some of the lowest, that it might be imagined a revolution had taken place in this country as well as in France. It is generally allowed, however, that the minister himself remains, in point of rank and fortune, nearly where he was before he came into power.

Since I have been led into a subject so different from the usual topics of our correspondence, I will indulge myself in a few thoughts, which are suggested by the occasion. I have often wondered that, with the ambition you possess, you have never cultivated a talent for public-speaking; since nothing is so likely to raise a man to such elevated situations, in this country, as that single faculty. You must be sensible, that it is next to impossible for any man, however otherwise accomplished, to hold the place of prime minister without it; whereas, if he

possesses that in a very eminent degree, every other requisite is taken for granted.

I am persuaded that it is not yet too late for one of your natural quickness and ingenuity: during the residence you are at present obliged to make in the country, you could not employ the time better than in composing speeches, and pronouncing them before a mirror; by which you will acquire becoming gesticulation, and accustom yourself to retain a series of arguments and illustrations in your memory. You will do well to prepare harangues for both sides; because there is no knowing which party may be uppermost by the time you shall obtain your seat. And, after you have chosen your side, and shown under whose banner you mean to fight, though it will be expected that you should make some kind of declaration regarding your future conduct, it will be worth your while to make yourself master of as many equivocal phrases as the English language admits, and

to use general expressions; that in case of your finding it for your interest to adopt opposite measures, you may have little difficulty in explaining away the obvious sense of your former declarations.

From a neglect of this necessary precaution, several persons of my acquaintance, in other respects of distinguished prudence, have found themselves in a very awkward situation.

I have been carried insensibly from my subject; and now, when I intended to resume, I am interrupted:—it is the aunt herself; she is in the drawing-room. She never visited me before without being accompanied with her niece. I must finish here, or miss the post. I shall write again to-morrow. Do not write to my son till you receive my next.

Adieu!

E. D.

P. S. Only write a short line, to tell me how old Phillips is.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

London.

THE visit, by which my letter of yesterday was interrupted, adds to my former solicitude that you should write in the most impressive terms to my son. I hope you are sufficiently convinced that the plan I am so anxious for, besides gratifying me, will greatly conduce to your own interest as well as as that of lord Deanport.

I will now inform you of the cause of the aunt's visit. I no sooner entered the room than I perceived something had disturbed the unmeaning simper that was wont to dwell among her round and rosy features. She told me, after a good deal of embarrassment and awkward circumlocution, "that she was extremely sorry to be obliged to speak on such a subject; but that it was impossible not to

be hurt at the coldness of lord Deanport's behaviour towards her niece, which had appeared so very evident at an assembly the preceding evening; that it must have struck every body; for his lordship had hardly spoken to her during the whole evening, though she had kept herself disengaged from cassino, the game she most delights in, on purpose to converse with him."

I assured her, "that, if I could have any idea of indifference for her niece on the part of my son, it would give me the most sensible uneasiness, because I was certain he never could meet with another young lady of equal worth; that I knew he was of the same way of thinking; but that he was of an inattentive turn of mind, and often had an air of indifference to the people he loved most; that, in short, it was mere habit."

She observed, a little fulkily, "that it was a very bad habit."

I acknowledged it; but added, in extenua-

tion, "that it was a habit which people of high rank were apt to contract without intention. You must have observed, my dear madam," said I, "how peculiarly *we* are liable to be absent and inattentive: I am convinced it must have occurred to yourself sometimes to have fallen into a kind of reverie, during which you hardly knew your intimate friends or acquaintance."

Flattered with the class I had placed her in, her features relaxed somewhat of their fullness, and she said, "that, admitting there was justice in what I urged, still it seemed strange that a man should behave with more coldness to the woman he loved than to others."

Endeavouring to remove the force of this observation, I began to hint at the effect of very respectful love, which sometimes produced a timidity and an appearance of coldness.—She interrupted me with impatience and indignation, saying "that she had heard

of excessive love and respect having been urged as an apology for the greatest insult a woman could receive; but that, in her opinion, men who were possessed of that kind of respect had no business to marry."

I was alarmed at the air of contempt with which she pronounced this, and hastened to remove the unfavourable impressions that I had accidentally given.

"My dear madam," said I, "did you never hear of men who, after being very warm lovers during the whole of their courtship, proved very cold husbands?"

She answered, in a very feeling accent, "that she not only had heard of such false deceivers, but had known some of them."

"Well; and no doubt you must also have known or heard of men who, after having been very cold and inattentive lovers, became most warm and affectionate husbands."

After a pause, she declared she never had.

"This surprises me," resumed I, "But

I can assure you that lord Deanport will be as strong a proof of the fact as a thousand instances ; because he has, from his infancy, had a kind of careless, negligent manner, to those he loves best. I myself, for example, have often experienced it, though, at bottom, he is the most affectionate and most dutiful of sons ; and to people, on the other hand, for whom he has no real regard, and never wishes to see in private, he is always very attentive in public. But you must remember that it is in mere external behaviour, and in trifling matters, that he displays this attention ; for, in essentials, he has no connection with them : and therefore, my dear madam," concluded I, " you may rely upon it, that, in the same degree that my son is negligent in matters of mere etiquette, he will be assiduous in things of importance ; and though you may think him rather a careless lover, your niece will find him an affectionate and dutiful husband ; for I know that it is both in his power and nature to be so."

This seemed to satisfy her ; and we parted as good friends as ever. I have spoken to my son on the subject ; but he is so very indolent, and so very apt to fail, in every resolution he makes, and every engagement he comes under, if he has not either some internal stimulant to excite him, or some external monitor to advise him, that I earnestly beg you will put the importance of this whole business, in as strong a point of view as you can, in your very next letter to him ; for, in spite of all my insinuations against lord Sordid, if he and his relations continue their attentions to the niece, and my son perseveres in his neglect of her, there is reason to dread the event.

Yours, as usual,

E. DEANPORT.

I expected you would rally me on my notion, that fortune at play often depends on seats. You are so polite as to tell me that this

is one of the few points in which I betray feminine weakness; but all the masculine reasoning in the world will not prevent me from believing what I have often seen confirmed by experience, though I cannot account for it.

LETTER XXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

London.

I HOPE you have got the short note I sent you immediately after your last to lord Deanport was received. I had only time to inform you how infinitely I was satisfied with it: it was indeed a master-piece. If you could acquire the same art and energy in public-speaking, and took care at the same time to ply that art and energy on the right side, there is no situation to which you would not have well-founded pretensions.

Your letter had the happiest effect. How could it fail? You touched every organ of sensibility in his frame—you struck every chord which could rouse his natural languor, and vibrate emotion to his heart: his interest, vanity, ambition, jealousy, were addressed in their turn.

The picture you drew of the triumph

of lord Sordid, and the magnificence he would be enabled to display on his marriage with miss Moyston, determined my son to thwart him, by an immediate renewal of his own assiduities. He came and informed me of his determination. I cautioned him to do this in a manner consistent with the account I had lately given of him, which I knew had been faithfully repeated to the niece.

The aunt and niece were equally delighted with the whole of his behaviour. They now thought that the carelessness which had shocked them before, and which they believed they still perceived in his address, was on the whole graceful. The young lady's delight was increased by the splendor of our liveries, and the taste of my son's dress on the birth-day. His renown as a minuet-dancer you are no stranger to. It would be difficult to decide whether miss Moyston was most pleased with the charms of his face, of his embroidery, or of his dancing ; but she seemed quite in raptures with the united effect of the three, As

he is now a little familiarised to the coarseness of her features and the vulgarity of her manners, the impression they at first made on him begins to diminish, while *that* derived from a contemplation of her wealth sinks deeper every day. I have good hopes that the whole business will be happily terminated within a very short time. I regret much that you cannot quit your post, were it but for a few days. I should like to have a little conversation with you before I speak to the aunt on the subject of settlements. On this interesting subject I am not fond of writing.

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER XL.

The Same to the Same.

London.

I AM sensible of the wisdom of what you suggest, in your last, respecting the settlements. Unquestionably, the more of the ready money miss Moyston shall keep at her own disposal, after marriage, the better will it be for herself, and the more convenient for me. I am convinced, with you, that I shall find it easier to deal with her than with my son on certain points.

It is long since you made it clear to me, from the indolence, the everlasting *ennui*, and the total want of resources in his own mind, that he must always be under the management of another, most probably of one woman after another. It is evident, however, that miss Moyston will never be of the number: she wants that degree of beauty,

and of compliance to his favourite tastes, without which every other accomplishment and virtue a woman can possess would be unsupportable to him. I am sufficiently aware, that it will be difficult for me long to retain that portion of influence with him that would be agreeable to myself, or useful to my friends ; on which account I was the more impatient to have the ceremony over as soon as possible ; being pretty sure, that, at the present moment, certain arrangements, highly expedient for me, would be complied with, and rendered irrevocable ; whereas, from the experience I have already had of my son's disposition, he might, at a future period, be less obliging.

When every circumstance seemed conducive to the speedy fulfilment of my wishes, a new and unexpected incident gave me inquietude, and was the cause of my postponing writing to you for so long a time.

I had hopes that it might prove an ill-founded alarm, and I wished to spare you

an uneasiness you could not remove ; but, as you express as much pain on account of my long silence as you will suffer from knowing the cause of it, I must inform you, that lord Deanport is captivated with a new face, to such a degree, that he again relaxes in his attentions to miss Moyston. It must be admitted, indeed, that if great beauty in a wife could impart as lasting and solid happiness to a husband as great fortune, my son would act wisely in preferring this interloper ; for she surpasses miss Moyston as much in the allurements of face and person as the latter does her in those of fortune. But he has already given proofs, which I need not mention to you, that mere beauty never could fix him above a month ; whereas his attachment to money seems to increase with his years : and besides, putting beauty entirely out of the question on the one part, and fortune on the other, miss Moyston would be a much more commodious wife for my son than this new charmer. The former, poor creature,

as soon as she finds herself entirely neglected by her husband, as most assuredly she will be, if Deanport proves to be her man, will directly fall to pouting, crying, and upbraiding, until, finding them of no effect, she will, at last, sink into tameness and submission, and become a slave for life, with the title of countess : whereas, from what I have already seen of the other, I strongly suspect that she is infinitely more likely to govern his lordship than to be governed by him.

The name of the damsel in question is Clifford : she is daughter of Northumberland Clifford, whom you must remember. He lived some time abroad after the death of his wife : he took this girl with him, and, I understand, returned about two years ago, and soon after died. He was cried up by some people as a man of strong sense, and even what they call genius. I was a little acquainted with him before his marriage ; but I could not bear his wife, and so I dropped both. The girl resides at present with Mr.

Darnley, who is married to her aunt. What does not tend to remove any prejudice I may have against this miss, is her being a favourite of that stately prop of stale virginity, lady Diana Franklin, who, of all those whom I hate, is the person I hate the most. This is placing her ladyship at the head of a pretty numerous band.

When I perceived that lord Deanport was more than usually attentive to Miss Clifford, I thought it requisite to inform myself a little of her temper and disposition, and with that view drew her into conversation two or three times, at the assemblies where I occasionally met her: but observing that Miss Moyston could not bear to see me speak to her, I saw it would not be safe to continue so long as to enable me to form a judgment of her character, though I could not help being struck with her manner, which, it must be confessed, is at once easy and dignified, and as cruelly contrasted with poor Miss Moyston's vulgar and constrained address

as the sweet countenance of the one is with the four aspect of the other.

Knowing that Mrs. Demure, the rich, handsome widow, visited Mrs. Darnley, Miss Clifford's aunt, and having observed that she made greatly up to the young lady, I thought I might learn something of her character and disposition from the widow: I therefore called on her, in the hope of obtaining the information I wished. On my mentioning Miss Clifford, she instantly set off on a full canter of panegyric—"Oh! she was the most delightful, most amiable, best-natured young woman she had ever known," with many accomplishments which she was enumerating; when I stopped her in the middle of her career, by observing, "that *no woman* in London seemed to be so much the object of admiration as her friend." She changed colour at this remark; and, after drawing her breath a little longer than usual, said—"Miss Clifford, unquestionably, is very much admired."

"Nay," said I, "I only mean *by the men*; for I know that the women in general prefer others."

"And pray," said Mrs. Demure, "whether does your ladyship think men or women the best judges?"

"The women, without doubt," answered I.

"I am completely of your ladyship's opinion," said she.

"I mean," resumed I, "that women are infinitely the best judges of every thing that is truly worthy of admiration, of every quality that a woman of a well-formed mind can be solicitous about; in short, of every thing except mere external beauty: of that, to be sure, my dear madam, the men are the best judges; and they, with one voice, give it in favour of your beloved friend, Miss Clifford."

"I did not know," said she, with a face which had suddenly changed from pale to crimson, "that they were so unanimous."

“ O yes !” cried I, (for I love to torment envious people)—“ O yes, my dear, quite unanimous, as to face and shape.—I heard,” continued I, “ the duke of ——, and you know that nobody studies female beauty more minutely than his grace—Well, I heard him declare, that nothing had appeared equal in beauty to Miss Clifford since the reign of the Gunnings.”

“ The duke,” said she, checking a sigh and forcing a smile, “ is an admirer of the beauties of the last age, or of foreign countries.—It is sufficient for Miss Clifford to have lived some years in Italy and France to obtain *his* admiration.”

I said “ I was ignorant that his grace gave so great a preference to foreigners.”

“ Did you not know,” said she, “ that he is in love with the whole French emigration ? did you not know that these French women are attempting to give the *ton* in London as much as they ever did at Paris ? and as for

my friend, Miss Clifford, she has more the air of an emigrant than of an English woman."

I owned I had not observed it; but she asserted that it was most apparent; adding, "that she not only had acquired the air, but likewise the sentiments and manners, of the French ladies, which," continued she, "are far more *free and easy* than those of our countrywomen, and, probably, more *to the taste of the men*, whom your ladyship thinks the best judges of beauty."

I was pleased to hear an insinuation of this nature; because lord Deanport, with that equity which distinguishes your sex, while he allows himself the utmost latitude, is wonderfully rigid in his notions respecting the conduct of women. His delicacy in that point is carried to a height that you could hardly have conceived in a man who has so very little in his behaviour towards them.

With all the inclination in the world to believe Mrs. Demure's insinuations just, I con-

fess I have some doubts on that head : first, because I know the widow to be as malicious as a monkey, and as envious as an old maid ; and, in the second place, because I recollect a very judicious observation of yours, when Miss ——, then in the bloom of her beauty, was given as the author of a certain report to my disadvantage—‘ *The insinuations of one handsome woman,*’ you said, ‘ *against another of superior beauty, are never to be believed.*’

I will, however, make inquiries concerning mademoiselle Clifford, from those whose testimony is more to be depended on than Mrs. Demure’s. She is too handsome not to have been exposed to many attacks, and particularly to those of scandal ; yet, unless it be the hints above mentioned, I have heard nothing to her disadvantage. I plainly perceive that both the aunt and niece are alarmed ; and, I fear, with too much reason. How provoking, after all the trouble I have taken, if this thoughtless young man should throw himself away at last ! I am much at a loss how to

proceed, and heartily wish you could come to town, were it but for a week. I have things to consult you on which I cannot trust on paper. You will come, I am sure, if you possibly can,

E. DEANPORT,

LETTER XLI.

From the Same to the Same.

I CANNOT help observing, my good sir, that your letters have been wonderfully laconic of late: your last was in the mercantile style, precisely confined to the *needful*. In your present confinement you must have much time on your hands: pray correct in your next letter the fault of which I complain.

I am still uneasy on account of this Miss Clifford; it is evident that my son becomes every day more attached to her: what will surprize you, however, she seems to be indifferent about him. This, in all probability, proceeds from affectation: if so, miss is a little out in her politics; she would have succeeded better with lord Deanport by affecting to be in love with him. This stratagem would fail indeed with a woman so very

plain in her appearance as Miss Moyston, or any other who did not, to a certain degree, please his fancy ; but I am convinced, from what I have observed in his disposition, that a woman who pleased him, though ever so little at first, and who would infallibly lose him by apparent indifference, might gradually draw him on to matrimony merely by affecting an irresistible passion for him. You could hardly have an idea how many women of my acquaintance have obtained very comfortable marriages, by making men, who would not otherwise have ever thought of them, believe that they secretly languished for them. A large share of vanity, with a moderate portion of good nature, disposes a man to fall into this snare. You lords of the creation have in general a far greater proportion of the first than of the second : yet I know a remarkable instance in which there appeared an equal share of both. A man of fortune, a relation of my husband, arrived at the age of fifty without the smallest inclination to marry.

He had been long acquainted with a maiden lady, about ten years younger than himself, with a considerable fortune, but with a disagreeable countenance, and a disposition resembling her face. The man thought no more of proposing marriage to her than to the Dutch pug she always had in her lap.

By the failure of a house in the city she lost three-fourths of her fortune. A female acquaintance of hers happened to lament this misfortune to my husband's relation; adding, as an aggravation, that, as she had now lost all her money, her old friends would no longer admit her into their loo-parties, and the poor woman would not know what to do with herself: she concluded by assuring him that this unfortunate lady had long harboured a secret fondness for him.

My husband's relation made proposals of marriage to the lady, and of course married her next day.

My husband was greatly astonished, and a little provoked, at this step of his relation.

"Did you marry her for her fortune?" said my lord, ironically, to the husband.

"Certainly not," answered he.

"Was it for the sake of her beauty?" added my lord.

"No; I cannot say it was," replied the other.

"Did you marry her for the sake of her sweet temper?"

"Not in the least," answered the other.

"In the devil's name, for whose sake did you marry such a woman?" exclaimed my lord.

"I married her for God's sake," answered the husband, with resignation.

My son, it is true; is in little danger of acting from the same motive; but he is assuredly fond of miss Clifford; and were she to show a partiality for him, I should tremble for the consequence.

I understand that she rides uncommonly well; that, in the north, she used sometimes to hunt. It is surprising that such excursions have not given rise to some stories that would be worth communicating to my son:

perhaps some such may exist, though confined to Northumberland; if so, I am in a fair way of hearing of them. I have learnt that a certain Mr. Proctor had for many years the management of Clifford's estate, and lived in great intimacy with his family. The man, however, I am told, is rather on ill terms with young Clifford, and of course will not be disposed to conceal any thing he knows to the disadvantage of the family. This man is in opulent circumstances, a widower, about the age of fifty, and has the reputation of being a very prudent man. You will probably suspect the truth of the last article, when I inform you that he lately made a proposal of marriage to a blooming lass of twenty-two. You must remember Peggy Almond, the handsome girl you have seen with me in Yorkshire. As she has little or no fortune, her aunt, and other relations, were all eager for her accepting so advantageous an offer; and, the girl herself having more love for his fortune than aversion against his person, the match would have

taken place, had I not interfered. I' certainly was of more use to Mr. Proctor, on this occasion, than all his prudence; for I persuaded the girl to decline the offer; representing him as a morose, vulgar old man, who would coop her up in a gloomy house in Northumberland, and prevent her from ever seeing London, or fashionable life, any more. My reason was, that if the man had really been so mad as to marry her, I should have lost her company, which I find rather an amusing resource when I go to the seat in Yorkshire. I, understanding that he is soon to be at York, when of course he will visit the aunt, with whom Peggy lives, I have written to her to draw from him all the information she can respecting the Clifford family, and particularly the private history of mademoiselle. That she may do this with the more zeal, I have given her reason to hope that I may send for her soon to the capital. You cannot have an idea of the power of this bribe on the mind of a girl deep-read in

plays and novels, who is constrained to live in the country, and is intoxicated with admiration of the amusements of the town. If Mr. Proctor had offered to carry her, for two or three months every season, to London, she would have accepted his hand, in spite of all I could have said or done. Indeed, it was by assuring her that I would take her thither with me last season that I prevailed on her to reject his suit; which I no sooner knew she had done, than I wrote a most affectionate epistle, in which I stated to her an insurmountable reason for leaving her behind; and poor Peggy was obliged to return to her aunt at York, disappointed of a husband; and, what she felt as severely, disappointed of a journey to London.

Though this girl is a real resource to me in the country, I have not the least need of her in town, and have therefore always found pretexts for leaving her behind. On the present occasion, however, I thought it expedient to throw out the old lure to her,

which, whether I may find it convenient to verify her expectations or not, will render her happy in the mean time ; for I am convinced she thinks and dreams of nothing but London ever since she received my last letter.

You shall know, in good time, the effect of her inquiries concerning miss Clifford. In the mean time I endeavour, by every means in my power, to keep miss Moyston and her aunt in good-humour : the latter is the most troublesome of the two. She insists on making me acquainted with her most intimate friends and relations, all of whom she characterises as the best kind of people in the world, and perfectly genteel ; and all of whom I find of the most disgusting vulgarity. The unconscionable woman insisted on my accompanying her to lady Mango's route, to which I had previously determined not to go, having already found it a service, not only of great fatigue, but also of some danger.

“But, you will say, “Who is lady Mango?”

That is a question which requires an answer at some length.—If I find leisure, you shall have it; for this woman’s history is singular enough.

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER XLII.

The Countess of DEANPORT to Miss ALMOND,
YORK.

MY DEAR PEGGY.

London.

YOU were witness to the pain I felt on our separation:—the same cruel circumstances which prevented me from bringing you with me to town have also prevented my answering any of the kind letters I have received from you since my arrival. You cannot imagine how I have been worried with business; but it is now almost over, and I am in some hopes that I may still have it in my power to send for you before the end of the season. I hope your aunt, to whom I beg you will present my affectionate compliments, will be prevailed on to part with you. We shall return together to Yorkshire; and, after you are tired with the amusements of the town, I anticipate the rural felicity we shall enjoy at Willow-Bank.

In one of your letters you inform me, that it is universally believed in Yorkshire that lord Deanport is immediately to be married to Miss Moyston; and in your last you say that you have just heard of his having fallen in love with Miss Clifford of Northumberland; which, it was thought, would break the intended match. You have too much good sense, my dear, to believe all the idle stories that are circulated; and I hope you have a better opinion of my son's understanding, than to imagine that he would act contrary to reason and propriety. Miss Moyston is a virtuous young lady, worthy of the hand of the first nobleman of this kingdom. As for the Miss Clifford you mention, I know little or nothing about her; but I will own to you, as a friend, that you have excited my curiosity to know somewhat of that damsel. They tell me she has been a good deal abroad, and has much the appearance of a French woman. I should like to know on what account she went abroad so *unexpectedly*, what *rumours*

were excited in the country on that head, and how she spent her time in Northumberland after her return: I hear she used to hunt a good deal. Of these and other particulars concerning her, you may procure me a circumstantial account from your old friend Mr. Proctor, who lived on an intimate footing with Miss Clifford's father, and had the management of his affairs when he was abroad. I approved of your refusing Mr. Proctor, notwithstanding his supposed wealth; because he is a retired kind of man, and lives not in that sphere of life in which you are formed for shining. I am glad, however, to hear that he still continues the victim of your eyes; because he may have it in his power to be useful to you in various ways.

I hear he is soon to be at York; and will no doubt be frequently at your aunt's during his stay. You will then find opportunities of getting the information I want.

I dare say that you will manage the business with your usual address, and without

letting it be known that I am the person for whom you make the inquiries. You shall know at meeting on what account I am desirous of having this information ; for which I am the more impatient, because the sooner it comes the sooner will it be in my power to send for you.

I remain yours affectionately,

E. D.

LETTER XLIII.

*The Countess of DEANPORT to JAMES*GRINDILL, *Esq.*

London.

LADY Faro was seized with a violent indigestion, after supping very heartily on capon stuffed with truffles. This terrified her to such a degree, that she has changed the night of her assembly from Sunday to Monday. She is still very ill, but I sincerely hope she will recover; for it would be very hard were she to make her escape before I had one other chance for the money she won from me last week.

Meanwhile, as none of my acquaintance who have card parties on Sunday are as yet come to town, I shall employ this evening in endeavouring to amuse myself and you with the history I promised. Lady Mango is the offspring of a respectable grocer in the city, who, having a variety of daughters, thought

it a prudent speculation to send the handsomest, and most troublesome of them, on a matrimonial venture to Bengal; where she had the good luck to hit the fancy of Mr. Mango, just after he had made an immense fortune by some very advantageous contracts. He paid assiduous court to the girl, made her splendid offers, and was in hopes of bringing the intrigue to a happy conclusion without marriage; but, profiting by the experience she had had previous to her leaving London, she rejected all terms in which that ceremony was not an article. After a hard struggle between his prudence and his passion, the latter obtained the victory, and Mr. Mango was married to Miss Figgs.

He was one of those men who put a great importance on whatever contributes, even in the smallest degree, to their own ease; and little or none to what conduces, even in the greatest degree, to the ease of others. This disposition is by no means very uncommon; but Mr. Mango possessed it in rather a greater

degree than usual. In him, however, this did not proceed from any positive cruelty of temper; but merely from an indolence of mind, which prevented him from ever thinking of any body's sensations but his own. In the East Indies, where men of his fortune travel in palanquins, have slaves to fan the flies from them while they repose, and are surrounded by the most obsequious dependants, this kind of indulgence of self, and forgetfulness of others, may be carried greater lengths without a check than in England. Mr. Mango was obliged to his wife for instructing him, that another person in his own family, besides himself, had a will of their own; and that it would tend to his tranquillity to follow that person's will instead of his own. This she accomplished without the assistance of genius; and without any talent whatever, except obstinacy; for in all other respects she was a weak woman. She made it a rule to insist, with unremitting perseverance, on every measure she proposed, until it

was adopted : and, by adhering to this simple rule, all her measures were sooner or later adopted ; for, what point will not a man give up, rather than hear an eternal harping on the same string ?

After Mrs. Mango had obtained the great object of her voyage to the East Indies, her next was to prevail on her husband to return to England; where the splendor in which she proposed to live was more flattering to her imagination than the luxuries at her command where she was. Mr. Mango informed her, “ that the situation of his affairs required that his family should remain another year in the East Indies ;” and she informed him, “ that it would be better for him and his family to return that very season to England.” She repeated this every day, and every hour of the day, for a month : after which the whole family embarked.

On their passage home, the wife was observed to be in good spirits, even when the weather was bad ; whereas the husband

complained of sickness, even when the weather was good: and a little before they arrived at Portsmouth, he acknowledged to one of the passengers, that his last *contract* was the most unfortunate one he had ever made.

He had hardly any acquaintance in London; and he was not much flattered by that of his wife's relations. Mr. and Mrs. Mango were, therefore, seldom together; and he appeared rather low-spirited for some time after their arrival: yet, when she asked him how he liked London, he had the politeness to answer, "that, on the whole, he preferred it to living aboard a ship."

By habit, London became less disagreeable to him; and as he saw little of his wife, and had formed some new acquaintance whose society amused him, he began to get the better of his dejection, when his spouse opened on him a new source of vexation, which lasted all his life.

Mr. Mango's Christian-name was Jeremiah.

When a boy at school, his comrades, for some whimsical reason, when they wished to tease him, used to call him *Sir Jeremiah*. Nothing provoked him so much; and he held in utter abhorrence the appellation ever after. He never signed Jeremiah, but always J. Mango. His correspondents were instructed to address their letters to him in the same manner. If he received one with *Jeremiah* at full length, it put him out of humour the whole day.

Most unfortunately for this gentleman, the husband of one of his wife's acquaintance was knighted; and his spouse, of course, instead of Mrs. Lotion, was called lady Lotion. This was a great mortification to Mrs. Mango, who considered herself as the superior of this acquaintance, because her husband was richer, and because, as she asserted, she was sprung from a more ancient and honourable family of grocers than the other.

Mr. Mango having come home one day in a gayer humour than usual to dinner,—after a

little preface, his spouse said, " that his friends were surpris'd that he did not apply to be created a knight."

The poor man turned pale in an instant, and burst into a cold sweat: he well knew the consequence of having that dignity conferred on him would be to have the detested name of Sir Jeremiah sounded in his ears for the rest of his life. He had often thanked his stars that this idea had never entered his wife's head, and had once cautioned one of his friends never to mention, in her presence, the name of a relation of his, who made a continual display of a foreign badge upon his breast, and had *Sir* pronounced before his name. The same friend told me, that Mr. Mango, in the fulness of his heart, on this affecting subject, had expressed himself, with some variation, in the words of Othello:

———" It has pleas'd heaven
To try me with affliction,
To steep me in marriage to the very lips,
To give to captivity me and my utmost hopes;

Yet still I find, in some place of my soul,
A drop of comfort.—I am not yet
A fixed figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow unmoving finger at”——

“For,” continued he, in a less emphatic tone, “though I hear frequently of wives teasing their husbands to apply to be made knights, yet that cursed fantasy has never occurred to mine; and I hope to slip quietly out of the world without being branded with the horrid appellation of Sir Jeremiah.”

Such being Mr. Mango's sentiments, it is easy to imagine how much he must have been shocked at what his wife said. He made no immediate reply, having some faint hope that it was a transient idea which she might never resume. But when Mrs. Mango repeated what she had said, he meekly represented to her the horror he felt at the thought of having the odious name of Sir Jeremiah continually resounded in his ears, and earnestly begged that she would not insist on a measure

which would subject him to such a mortification.

To this Mrs. Mango replied, "that he was to blame in disliking the name of Jeremiah; that, though not a royal name, like those of David, and Solomon, and Rehoboam, and others, yet it was a scripture-name as much as any of them, and the name of a great prophet; that, although the French revolution had decreased the number of kings, and increased that of prophets, yet a great prophet was as great a rarity as a great king, and in a short time, perhaps, would be a greater; that the appellation of Sir Jeremiah, therefore, was at least as respectable as that of Sir any thing else. She also represented that every alderman, contractor, apothecary, physician, and broker in London, who had scraped together one half of his fortune, applied to be created a baronet or knight; that the difference was nothing to her; and, as he had no children, was as little to him; but that it was

indispensably necessary that he should be the one or the other."

Mr. Mango was too well acquainted with the persevering temper of his wife to have any hope, after this declaration, of prevailing on her to renounce her whim. He well knew that the same representation, in more acrimonious terms, would be made to him at breakfast, dinner, and supper, as well as in bed, until the point was carried: he therefore thought it best to contest the matter no longer; but, making a virtue of necessity, applied to a friend who had some small interest at court, and he was soon after created a knight, and was, to his sorrow, denominated Sir Jeremiah; and his wife, to her great satisfaction, became lady Mango.

After this, she gave entertainments more unmercifully than ever: she invited all the West as well as the East Indies to her routs and assemblies, at which she glittered with gold and jewels, like the queen of Sheba.

at Bartholomew-fair, and never fails to gather such a crowd, that her company are as well squeezed as at any assembly or rout within the bills of mortality. I was present at one in very hot weather, when several women fainted; and a corpulent lady, dressed in black with a mass of white plumage on her head, happening to enter at the instant, Mr. Travers, who stood by me, said, "Thank heaven! here comes a hearse to carry off the dead bodies."

But poor Mr. Mango did not long survive the name of Sir Jeremiah: it gave a knell to his heart, and a kind of hectic suffused his cheek as often as he heard it pronounced. He dwindled and died at no distant date after he received the honour of knighthood.

Though his fate was evident several weeks before it took place, Mrs. Mango would never admit that he was in any danger, nor ever altered her own way of living. She told her company, that he delighted in seeing every body merry around him; but, when

she was told that her husband was actually dead, she made as great a display of surprize and sorrow as if, in the midst of perfect health, he had dropped down in an apoplexy.

Her sorrow, however, became real, when his last will was examined. She knew that he had made *one* will, by which she was left a large sum ; but she did not know that he had afterwards made another, cancelling the first, and leaving the whole of his fortune among his relations ; so that she has nothing but the jointure granted by her contract of marriage. *That*, however, is sufficiently ample to enable her to indulge her only passion, by giving frequent entertainments, in all of which she is sure to appear as ridiculous, though not so magnificently dressed, as in the days of her husband. The Moystons assure me that I am a very great favourite of lady Mango.—I cultivate her partly as a subject of laughter, but chiefly because she is admired by the Moystons. The outlines

of the foregoing portrait I had from the aunt.
The colouring you will, at first sight, perceive
to be that of

Your humble servant,

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER XLIV.

JAMES GRINDILL, *Esq.* to the COUNTESS of
DEANPORT.

Phillipshall.

NOTHING could be more destructive of all your ladyship's projects, with regard to lord Deanport, than his attachment to miss Clifford. I saw her first as I passed through Lausanne, where she then resided with her father. She was even then universally admired, not only on account of her beauty, but also for the acuteness of her understanding. I was afterwards informed, that a young Englishman, of immense fortune, had fallen in love with her, proposed marriage, and offered settlements, which few peers could, with less inconvenience, have made good. Her refusal of this gentleman was the more surprising, because he was of a character which women in general wish most to find in a husband; handsome, liberal, and of so

pliant a temper, that she could not have failed to have had the entire disposal of him and his fortune. What do you think was the girl's objection? She discovered, that, notwithstanding his having had an university-education, he had not the least taste for reading; of course, was rather ignorant; and, in her opinion, forsooth, greatly beneath the intellectual standard which she thought indispensable; and she viewed him with a kind of compassion, bordering on contempt. The most surprising part of the story is, that the father, instead of combating the childish and romantic notions of his daughter, rather encouraged them. Thus this man of *strong sense and genius* lost an opportunity of marrying his daughter advantageously; which a man of common sense, without a particle of genius, would have seized.

This very singular prejudice of the girl in favour of pedants, I presume, did not last long; for in France and Italy she was distinguished for the graces and accomplishments

peculiar to her sex ; seemed to know the full value of even her *external* charms, and to have the same taste with other beauties, for admiration on their account.

There can be no doubt of her having severely repented the egregious folly of her conduct at Laufanne, which indeed nothing but youth and inexperience could render at all excusable. The more sensibly she feels for her error, the more anxious will she be to repair it, when a similar opportunity occurs.

As for her airs of indifference respecting lord Deanport, they proceed, I am convinced, from coquetry, and are intended to fan his flame up to the marrying point ; for, though naturally of a lively temper, yet I understand that she is of a very different character from her brother, who is one of the most rash, headstrong young fellows alive, everlastingly in one scrape or another.

But, though she may deserve the character of being far more circumspect than

him, it is by no means improbable that, during her residence abroad, or since her return, she may have been sufficiently unguarded in her conduct to leave room for constructions which would have a strong effect on the suspicious mind of lord Deanport: but this must be managed with great delicacy; any attempt to prejudice him against her, without being successful, would rivet him more to her than ever. Nobody knows, better than your ladyship, how easy it is for a woman to convince her lover of her innocence, and to turn his rage against her accusers. Whatever accounts you may receive from miss Almond, therefore, I dare say you will be cautious respecting the manner and terms in which they are communicated to your son.

Your ladyship may think the idea whimsical; but I cannot help being of opinion, that your son might be cured of his partiality for this lady by insinuations of a different nature. You must have observed, that he ne-

ver could endure the company of persons of distinguished genius ; and, though nobody can be more fond of the reputation of wit, or more ready to display every spark of that kind that occurs to his imagination, yet he hates the same disposition in those who are more successful than himself. He can bear *no rival near the throne* : he shuns all companies in which he is not considered as supreme, not only in rank, but repartee. He finds little difficulty with respect to the first ; but, when he adheres rigorously to the last article, his society is confined to admiring dependants, listeners, and others, whom your ladyship used to express uneasiness at seeing him connected with. This prejudice against the society of men of talents or genius he has in a still stronger degree against women of the same description. He cannot bear the company of a female who has the least pretension of that kind : and I am very much mistaken, if all the passion he feels for miss Clifford could maintain its ground against the

dislike he has to women of distinguished wit and understanding, which he cannot always suppress, even to his nearest relations. I am not absolutely convinced that you yourself are, on all occasions, an exception.

In my humble opinion, therefore, you have a better chance of breaking his connection with miss Clifford by representing her to him as a woman of spirit, highly accomplished and intelligent, than by insinuations to the prejudice of her character in any respect; besides, her whole conduct and conversation will tend to confirm your representations respecting the first, and to destroy the credit of the second.

I understand, indeed, that though miss Clifford really possesses a good deal of wit, she is not so apt to exhibit it in mixed company as most people of wit are: it may be necessary, therefore, to engage some of your female acquaintance to provoke her, in the presence of his lordship, by an attack on

some of her absent friends ; this will certainly throw her off her guard, and she will defend them with a spirit which will show her in her true colours : or, if you should not have an opportunity for this, it would answer the same purpose to invent a few *bon-mots* (an easy task for your ladyship), and have them repeated to your son as the happy effusions of miss Clifford's wit.

I have heard of the Mr. Proctor you mention : he is a weak man. He rejected very tempting offers for his interest at an election, though he had no other connection with the candidate he supported than his having been the friend of Clifford, the father : this seems next to idiotism ; for Mr. Clifford was, at that time, dead.

However his love to miss Almond, and hatred to young Clifford, may prompt him to disclose circumstances, respecting his sister, which may promote your ladyship's scheme, I must repeat, that you cannot be too cau-

tious of avoiding any insinuations against the young lady, whose falsehood is likely to be discovered to your son.

I am extremely concerned that I cannot leave this place at present. Besides his bodily disease, my poor cousin is in so very weak a state of mind, that he could be swayed to any thing by those around him; and I can trust none of them. I do not believe that any deed he could execute, in his present state, would be valid in law; but I am *not* certain that it would not; and still less what he might be induced to do if I were absent: I am resolved, therefore, not to quit my post till all is over. There is no knowing how long he may linger, for the doctors cannot persuade him to take any of their prescriptions.

I hope lord Deanport is fully sensible of the obligations he lies under to your ladyship for the great attention you have always paid to his interest, and that he will show his gratitude in the most substantial manner as soon as his marriage with miss Moyston is

concluded ; but I do believe *that*, or some other event of the same nature, must previously take place. He may, I imagine, be prevailed on to part with what he feels superfluous ; but I question greatly whether any sense of obligation will make him yield to another what he thinks in the smallest degree necessary to himself.

I admire the portrait prodigiously that your ladyship was so obliging as to send me, especially the colouring, which, in my opinion, is exquisite. It is long since I knew that you were a very ingenious artist, but I was unacquainted with your chief excellence before. There is one other use, however, which you might make of lady Mango and her East-India friends, besides that of turning them into ridicule : they generally play deep, and some of them very inattentively. I dare swear your ladyship would win from most of them, in whatever *seat* you were placed.

I remain your ladyship's most obedient
and faithful servant,

J. GRINDILL.

P. S. Your ladyship is so admirable a painter, that I should be highly obliged for a sketch of the fair widow Demure, from your pencil. You seem to think me better acquainted with her than I am.

London.

LETTER XLV.
LADY DEANFORT TO JAMES GRINDILL, Esq.

London.

I WILL not be so uncandid as to dispute the validity of your reasons for remaining fixed to your post. I should never forgive myself, if, in consequence of your yielding to my solicitation, your cousin were influenced by those around him to make settlements prejudicial to your interest. Whilst I regret your absence, therefore, I cannot help approving of your perseverance.

You shall have the sketch you desire, of the widow Demure:—though she tries to conceal some of her strongest features, I think I have caught them all.

I beg you to take notice of my goodness, in complying with your request, at the very instant when you refuse mine.

Mrs. Demure's father had a large estate in

one of our West-India islands : her mother was a native of that country. When they quitted it, to establish themselves in England, their family consisted of two sons and a daughter ; so that, although the father was rich, this daughter had but a moderate portion.

The Christian-names of Mary, Ann, Elizabeth, &c. which it was anciently the custom in this island for parents to bestow upon their daughters, began, some years ago, to be changed for Maria, Anna, Eliza. These, with other royal, imperial, and poetical names, came afterwards so much in fashion, that Carolinas, Charlottas, Augustas, Julias, and Sophias, are now to be found in every alley of London ; and particularly, as I have been told, in the environs of Covent-garden and Drury-lane. This being the case, it was not surprising that the mode was transported to our West-India islands.

The name of Mrs. Demure's father was Black ; and the Christian name of her grand-

mother, from whom he looked for a legacy, Grizzel. The old lady expected that the child should be named after her; and both the parents agreed that it would be dangerous to disoblige her: they told her, however, that they wished to add two other very delightful names; and the old lady had the complaisance to say—"That she had no objection to their giving their daughter as many names as they pleased, provided hers was one of them." They had already prepared the two names which they thought best calculated to correct the vilifying impression of Grizzel. Mrs. Demure's maiden-name, therefore, was Angelina Celestina Grizzel Black.

She was only nine years old when she came to England. At twelve or thirteen, when English females are generally considered as children, Angelina Celestina had much the appearance of a woman. She was already beautiful. The advance of time promised perfection to the rising beauties of her person, and opened fresh charms in her counte-

nance. The effect of time, on the charms of the mother, was directly the reverse.— She did not perceive this in her looking-glass; but she became sensible of it in a manner still more mortifying, by an evident diminution in the attentions of the men, which began to turn from herself to her daughter; and the beauties of the one seemed to bloom in proportion as those of the other withered. The mother, at last, considered her daughter in the light of a thief, who stole from her those goods on which she put the highest value; and she felt an aversion from her accordingly.

With all the stress which some people put on what they call natural affection, this does not seem to me at all extraordinary; for what is more natural than to hate those whom we see enjoying what we have lost. I have heard the mother condemned, on that account, by men who had an abhorrence to the sight of their own nearest relations, for

no other reason than because they were heirs to their estates: as if it were not more provoking to see another enjoying what you have been deprived of, during your life, than merely to know that he is to possess it after your death. And I shall leave it to any beautiful woman to judge, whether it would not both mortify and provoke her more, to see her beauty, than to see her estate, transferred to another. Yet men are astonished that Mrs. Demure's mother should have a prejudice against her own daughter! It must be confessed, Mr. Grindill, that of all the inconsistent animals on earth, men are the most so. Your whole sex is a composition of vanity, caprice, and contradiction. I will not deny, however, that there are exceptions.

But to return to the history of miss Angelina Celestina Grizzel Black.

Her father was an extravagant, thoughtless man, but extremely indulgent to his

daughter. The mother had never loved her husband, and now disliked him more than ever, on account of that indulgence: she became daily more peevish and morose to her husband, and treated her daughter with augmenting severity. Young Angelina's disposition did not improve by the example of that mutual detestation which existed between her father and mother. She coaxed and laughed at the one, dreaded and hated the other, and tried to deceive both. The extravagance of the sons ruined the father's affairs, and brought him to his grave. Narrow circumstances increased the malignant tempers of the mother and daughter, who now lived in a state of most acrimonious discord with each other. The former was sometimes overheard pouring reproaches of a singular nature upon her daughter. Some people imputed these entirely to the intemperance of the woman; but it is not likely that a mother would accuse a daughter without foundation. The

young lady, no doubt, heard of the rumours which those accusations gave rise to, for she became at once wonderfully circumspect, hypocritical, and prudish.

Having seen the distress which the ruinous state of her father's affairs had thrown his family into, she grew so fond of money (a disposition she had never before manifested), that, in her opinion, life was not worth holding without a great deal of it. To secure so essential an article, therefore, and to be relieved from the vexations of her mother, she accepted the hand of Mr. Demure, a man extremely rich, and extremely infirm, of the same character and the same age with her father, and of an appearance more disagreeable than men usually are at any age. He was generally confined one half of the year with the gout. She displayed a great deal of care and sympathy about this poor man, nursed him in his confinement, warmed his flannels, smoothed his pillow; and made him

believe, at last, that she really had some affection for him.—What is so extravagant and inconsistent, that handsome women, assisted by men's vanity and self-love, cannot make them believe?

Some of those who were witnesses to her behaviour were so imposed on by the tender and sympathising manner in which she performed those disgusting offices, that they adopted the opinion of her husband: as if it were not infinitely more likely, that a young woman should act the part of a hypocrite, which is so natural, and which the prejudices of men has rendered so necessary to young women, than that she should have an affection for an infirm man.

Besides, Mrs. Demure, from particular circumstances, had been even more habituated to dissimulation than young women usually are. She had been under the necessity of concealing her feelings from an earlier date than common. She had served a

long apprenticeship to hypocrisy and simulation.

After she took the intrepid step of marrying such a man as Mr. Demure, it was incumbent on her to overcome her disgust, however strong it might be, and seem to love him: it was equally incumbent on her to persevere till his death: had she relaxed in her caresses, he might have served her as Sir Jeremiah Mango did his lady.

Still some people were astonished that even those considerations could prevail on a woman, so formed for pleasure, to submit to so long a deprivation; for the man held out a full half year after her marriage; which, no doubt, was a longer period than she had calculated on.

But this difficulty is removed, by supposing that she submitted to no such thing; which is my fixed opinion.

On the death of her husband, Mrs. Demure had too much sagacity to over-act the

part of the sorrowful widow in the ridiculous manner lady Mango had done. She knew very well that every person of common sense was persuaded that she internally rejoiced at the event; she therefore exhibited no greater signs of affliction than decency required. It is true that she continued her weeds longer than was absolutely necessary; but that was because she had been told that Mr. Mordaunt had said she never had looked so beautiful and interesting as in them.

Her partiality for him was discovered, or strongly suspected: though she had deceived her husband, she could not conceal it from her sharp-sighted rivals. She hoped, however, to overcome his well-known aversion to marriage; but he gave no hint of any change of sentiment in that article. She tried what coldness would do; and affected a reserve, of which she had never before made him sensible; he bore this with equanimity, and turned his attentions to other women:—this she could not endure; and therefore

drew him back, by a display of all her former partiality. About this juncture, as I am fully persuaded, he was indulged in the strongest possible proofs of her kindness. At no very distant period after this, however, a complete rupture seems to have taken place between them. Some imputed this to Mordaunt's usual inconstancy; others thought it was, in a great measure, owing to an occurrence which made some noise at that time.

Mrs. Demure had a negro-maid, of the name of Phillis, who, from her childhood, had been attached to her person, and had always given every proof of affection to her mistress. The girl once forgot to execute some order which her mistress had issued: the neglect was of no importance; but it was discovered when the lady happened to be in a very ill humour. She threatened to have the girl punished with all the severity that is used in the West-India islands. The girl hinted, that the law of England stood in the way of such an outrage. Mrs. Demure be-

came instantly sensible, that what the girl insinuated was true. She said nothing more on the subject; and appeared to have forgotten the affair, and to be reconciled to her maid.

About two months after, however, Phillis was decoyed on-board a ship just ready to sail for the West Indies, with directions that she should be delivered to the manager of her brother's estate, who was instructed to turn her among the field-negroes.

So far from being sensible that she had behaved cruelly, Mrs. Demure boasted of this, as an ingenious and proper manner of punishing the sauciness of a slave.

People's opinions were divided on the subject. The West-India merchants, and those concerned in the slave-trade, who certainly ought to be the best judges, thought that Mrs. Demure served Phillis right: others were of a different way of thinking. Every body allows that Phillis is a sweet-tempered, obliging girl; but, after all, she was a slave;

and if slaves are treated with what they call humanity, how are we to have sugar?

People ought to allow themselves to reflect seriously on consequences before they decide in matters of this kind.

I have been assured, however, that Mr. Mordaunt was shocked when he heard of this transaction; for, though he is by no means a weak man in other respects, he is exceedingly compassionate, and rather romantic in his ideas. Whether this was the chief cause of his breach with Mrs. Demure cannot be ascertained; but what gives some weight to that notion is, that he wrote to a friend in the West Indies to purchase Phillis as soon as possible, and send her back to England by the first opportunity; which was done accordingly. The girl is now free and happy, in the family of Mr. Mordaunt's friend, colonel Sommers.

When Mrs. Demure came to the knowledge of this, it redoubled the wrath she had already conceived against Mr. Mordaunt. Her

usual caution and dissimulation are apt to forsake her at the bare mention of his name; the least allusion to their ever having been friends disturbs her. I sometimes touch on the tender part on purpose; and she winces immediately. At my instigation, lady Blunt has pressed upon it more roughly, which never fails to set her a fretting, to the satisfaction of all who know her. This tends to confirm all that is whispered; but, as I am solicitous to have such confirmation of this as would satisfy others, I have frequently endeavoured to draw it from Mordaunt. I never expected that I could bring him to a direct avowal; but I had some hopes that he would deny it, as is usual enough with certain fine gentlemen, in such manner as would leave no doubt of its truth. In this, however, I was disappointed. I tried to tempt him by informing him of a strong instance of Mrs. Demure's malice against himself. Even this had no effect; and, if I had nothing to form a judgment from but the words and beha-

viour of Mr. Mordaunt, I should be under the necessity of concluding that my suspicions are groundless.

I understand that it is a principle of his, that no instance of rage or malice on the part of a woman can justify a man for betraying the confidence she once placed in him. I believe Mrs. Demure knows this, which emboldens her to use the freedom she does with his character.

I will now acquaint you with the particular reason I have for hating this woman. After she had lost all hope of subduing Mordaunt's aversion to marriage, she turned her eyes on Lord Deanport. I was a little surprised at the very obsequious manner in which, of a sudden, she paid her court to me, till I discovered that my son was as obsequiously paying his court to her: the one explained the other. I was seriously alarmed, though this occurred before I thought of Miss Moyston. I knew Mrs. Demure to be a most deceitful, intriguing, ambitious, and

interested woman, a character which, above all others, I abhor. I was convinced that, from the moment she should become his wife, I should have no influence over him; that he would be lost to me as much as if he were in his grave. Besides, what renders the idea of such a marriage preposterous, independent of every other circumstance, is her being so much older than my son; though she had the impudence to assert that they were nearly of the same age: as if it were possible that any body could believe that I am as much older than her as I must admit myself to be older than lord Deanport. You cannot be surprised that I determined to break his connection with a woman capable of such a gross calumny.

I do not assert that his passion for Mrs. Demure was as violent as that which he felt for Miss Clifford; but still I found that I had undertaken a difficult task. It is easier to prejudice men against plain-looking women, of the very best character, than to alienate them

from beautiful women whose characters are equivocal, or even positively bad. The story of the negro girl, which had frozen the passion of Mr. Mordaunt, had little or no effect on lord Deanport.

After various attempts to disentangle him from the snares of Mrs. Demure, I at last hit on a device which succeeded.

It was not Mrs. Demure's disposition, nor any thing respecting her mind, that bewitched my son : though it would have been easy, it would have been superfluous, to have attacked her moral qualities. Her beauty, and the high idea he had of her personal charms, were the only spells by which she bound him to her. My aim, therefore, was to weaken or dissolve these ; for which purpose I had it distantly insinuated to my son, that, in spite of her apparent health, she was tainted with a certain hereditary distemper, for which I knew he had the greatest horror. I adopted this expedient with the less scruple, because, for any thing I know to the contrary, the in-

sinuation may be true:—be that as it may, it entirely cured my son of his love.

From this sketch you will form a pretty just idea of my sweet friend Mrs. Demure. You may observe the influence of a little flattery; the praise you bestowed on my portrait of lady Mango tempted me to this last task, though I really have more important business on my hands.

I expect to hear from Miss Almond every hour. In the expectation of seeing you soon in London, in consequence of the Welshman's setting out on a longer journey,

I remain yours, &c.

E, DEANPORT.

LETTER XLVI.

Miss ALMOND to the COUNTESS of DEANPORT.

York.

As the favour and protection with which your ladyship honours me form the chief happiness of my life, the fresh proof of your confidence, which appears in your last letter, affords me heart-felt pleasure.

Your ladyship does me no more than justice in thinking that I would not readily believe your son would act with so much impropriety as to forsake a young lady of such shining virtues as miss Moylton possesses, for one who has, perhaps, little else but personal charms to boast of.

It would be astonishing, indeed, if a nobleman, so accomplished, and, permit me to say, though I know you hate flattery, but this is not flattery, one who owes his best accomplishments to the best of mothers—I say it

would be astonishing if he should act unlike a man of quality in the important point of marriage. He ought to remember that he has to support the dignity of his ancestors; for he is not like the new-made lords, who, they say, have hardly any ancestors at all: whereas every body knows that few men in England, or even Wales, have more ancestors than his lordship.

My lord Deanport has made the tour of Europe, and seen a great deal of the world; but, by making only the tour of Yorkshire, he might have learned to make a good bargain, and have discovered that nothing supports the dignity of an ancient family so much as money.—I once saw miss Moyston at the play-house in York, when Othello was acted. To be sure that young lady's countenance cannot be called exceedingly beautiful; but I hope his lordship will view her visage in her vast fortune, just as Desdemona says she viewed the black visage of her lover in his mind.

I have delivered your ladyship's affectionate

compliments to my aunt, who desires me to return the same to you; and I am sure she understands politeness too well to refuse your request, that I should wait on you this season in London, where I can enjoy as much rural felicity as in the country; so that your ladyship will not need to leave it for Willow-Bank sooner than is quite convenient. Indeed, I must confess that my aunt could part with me now more easily than at any other time, because she has just began a very long romance, and likewise expects a visit from her sister-in-law, who will stay with her at least three weeks; and, over and above, she has just received a present, which never fails to comfort her when she is nervous or in low spirits.

As for Mr. Proctor, whose proposals your ladyship took so much pains to prevail on me to refuse, on account of his age and being morose, and living in Northumberland, I own I have suffered a good deal of ill-humour from my relations on that account. They

are continually telling me of young women like myself, who, notwithstanding their being married to men older than Mr. Proctor, are the mothers of several children; that, so far from being morose, he is a cheerful, good-natured man, with whom I could do what I pleased, and might easily persuade to live a good part of the year in London. I am determined, however, never to repent having followed your ladyship's counsel, though he should never renew the same proposal, which surprises me a little that he never has; but I am fully convinced that your ladyship will never allow me to be a loser by having followed your advice.

My aunt informed me yesterday that she understood that Mr. Proctor's journey to York was delayed; and therefore I shall not have an opportunity of speaking to him on the subject your ladyship mentions: but, that I may show my obedience to your commands, and do all in my power to procure you the information you require, I wrote to him directly, and

have no doubt of his answering my letter speedily.

Had it not been to oblige your ladyship, I should have scrupled to have written to any man that is not a near relation, and far less to him, particularly as he has never repeated his proposal, which several of my relations think, in politeness, he ought to do; because a lover that takes the first refusal, they say, is no lover at all. But as for that, he may do as he pleases; for I am quite certain, as I said before, that your ladyship is too generous to allow me to be a loser by following your advice, being all from one who is, and ever will be,

Your ladyship's

Most faithful, most obedient, and

most obliged, humble servant,

MARGARET ALMOND.

LETTER XLVII.

Miss ALMOND to DANIEL PROCTOR, Esq.

SIR,

York.

MY aunt desires me to return you thanks for the potted shrimps you were so good as to send, as well as for the fix bottles of cherry-brandy that came by the same coach.

I am obliged to you for the favourable opinion you still retain of me, as expressed in your letter to my aunt. I can assure you that my declining your proposal did not proceed from any objection to your person, or even to your age; for, I must confess, I never was an approver of those giddy women who have a taste for husbands that are too young.

My hesitation respecting your proposal of marriage arose entirely from a kind of delicacy, which, as I am sometimes nervous, produces a dread of matrimony, that I can-

not, all at once, overcome. From the friendship you still express for me, I dare say it will afford you pleasure to know that I have less of this nervous complaint since I took steel-pills, by the advice of young Dr. Ironsides, who has great skill in women's complaints: he is the son of your acquaintance, the old doctor, who has left off practice. But, to prove to you that you possess a great deal of my confidence and esteem, I will inform you, that a person of high rank in the State has applied to me for as many circumstances as I can collect respecting the family of the late Mr. Clifford of Northumberland, against some of whom, particularly the daughter, it is easy to perceive that my friend has received unfavourable impressions. As you were long acquainted with that whole family, and, I have heard, have been ungratefully used by them, I thought you the properest person I could apply to for such an account of her as will be agreeable to my friend, whom I have it much at heart to oblige.

Miss Clifford is said to have something the appearance and air of a French woman; but that may be her misfortune more than her fault; for, no doubt, she would rather look like an English woman, if she could; though, it must be owned, the French dress the neatest.

It is also said, that in Northumberland she used to go a-hunting with men, and that her father carried her abroad very suddenly, which occasioned various rumours through the country. I hope you will be able, soon, to send a satisfactory answer, as to the above particulars, to,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

M. ALMOND.

P. S. We hear you intend to live, for the future, one half of the year, at least, in London; which gives great pleasure to my aunt, and many of your friends at York, because they will have the pleasure of seeing you as

you go and return.—It is also reported, that miss Proctor is just going to be married, and, therefore, to leave your house for that of her husband. This must give great satisfaction to her as well as her husband; for I hear she is very pretty. So I give you joy, with all my heart, and hope you will let me know if the report be true.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. PROCTOR to Miss ALMOND.

DEAR MISS ALMOND.

Morpeth.

I AM glad that the shrimps and brandy arrived safe. The last time I had the pleasure of dining with you, I remember your having praised a dish of the former, which made me order some to be potted for you. And, as your worthy aunt complained of a pain in her stomach, which obliged her to take a glass of cherry-brandy before she could venture to taste the port after dinner, I presumed to send a few bottles for her particular use. This explains the reason of my choosing these two articles, which otherwise might seem unfuitable presents to ladies.

As to the requests conveyed in your letter, now lying on the desk before me, I assure you that you cannot be more earnest to oblige any person, however high in point of rank, or of

whatever importance in the State, than I am to fulfil your desire ; for which reason, that I may fulfil it in the circumstantial manner you require, I shall postpone all other business until I shall have finished this letter, which I foresee will be pretty long. I begin this task the more willingly, because it will remove the prejudices of your correspondent against a worthy family ; and few can be more worthy than that of my late honoured friend Mr. Clifford, with the exceptions however that shall be hereafter excepted.

To avoid prolixity, without farther preface, for brevity's sake, I must acquaint you that Mr. Clifford was a gentleman of a respectable family and good estate in Northumberland.

Soon after he returned from his travels he married lady Horatia Fitzherbert, a young woman of quality, with a very moderate fortune ; but, were I to enumerate all the good qualities of this admirable lady, my letter would extend to a very great length indeed ;

and therefore, for brevity's sake, as a worthy old friend of mine used to say, and I said before, I shall only assure you that she was universally acknowledged to be the most accomplished woman in all Northumberland, which is the largest county in England except Yorkshire.

For the space of ten years after their marriage, Mr. Clifford and lady Horatia spent a few months every year in London, and the rest in the country. At the end of that period, their family consisted of a son of nine years of age, and a daughter of six, for whose education Mr. Clifford and his lady resolved to live entirely at London; a resolution which occasioned much sorrow in the neighbourhood they quitted. I was then entrusted with the management of Mr. Clifford's affairs, and had always opportunities of seeing him when I went to London; which was as seldom as I could, because I greatly prefer Morpeth; not from any foolish partiality to my native city, or because there are not agreeable society to be met with in London, but

merely on account of the other being on the whole the pleasantest place of the two.

Mr. Clifford's son was put to Westminster-school: the daughter received the instruction that was thought necessary under the eye of her mother; and the progress she made in various accomplishments, in the space of two years, are said to be wonderful. At that period lady Horatia died. This affected her husband so much, that, leaving his son at Westminster-school, he retired with his daughter to his house in Northumberland, and never entirely recovered his spirits afterwards. So far from resuming that style of hospitality in which he had lived formerly, and for which his family had long been distinguished in the county, he now entertained only a very few friends, and those but seldom.

It has been said, that men who are passionately fond of hunting have no great relish for books; but Mr. Clifford had a very great relish for both: from which you will observe,

my dear young lady, that there is no rule without an exception. But it must be acknowledged, that, for a considerable time after the death of his lady, Mr. Clifford entirely left off hunting, and spent most of his time in his library; and his chief pleasure was to observe the improvement of his daughter's understanding, who, young as she then was, spent several hours every day in reading to her father, and in conversing with him on what she had read: by which means she acquired a taste for some parts of literature that are seldom cultivated by women. Now, it is generally said, that this renders women pedantic and disputatious in company: but here again I must repeat, that there is no rule without an exception; for Miss Horatia Clifford is extremely modest and unassuming in company, which is what cannot be said of some very ignorant ladies of my acquaintance.

Among other accomplishments, miss Clifford was at great pains to acquire that of playing on the harp, an instrument of which her

father was exceedingly fond, and which she accompanied with her voice, which was wonderfully sweet. She generally chose plaintive and mournful airs. In this, I confess, I think she judged wrong, as merry tunes would have been more likely to cheer up his heart; whereas most of those she played and sung to him were so very sad, that they would have made the most cheerfully-disposed people melancholy. This was the more surprising, because the young lady is naturally of a cheerful temper, with a great deal of vivacity; but I *suspect* that she preferred mournful airs not so much from her own taste as to humour her father's melancholy.

I remember once, that when she was in the middle of one of those sorrowful tunes, the very tears burst from my eyes before I knew where I was. I never was so much ashamed in my life, and I endeavoured to conceal it as much as I could; but whether miss Clifford perceived it or not I am uncertain; for it is so contrary to the disposition of that

young lady to hurt any person, or to put them in the least out of countenance, that, I am sure, she would have seemed not to have observed this instance of my weakness, even although it had struck her.

A little before his son left Westminster-school for the university, Mr. Clifford put him under the particular care of one of his friends, and then set out with his daughter for Switzerland. This did not happen suddenly, as has been represented to you, nor yet unexpectedly; for he talked of it a full year before they went. I remember of no conjectures or rumours upon the occasion, unless the sorrow of all who knew them, and the lamentations of the poor, are thought such.

After passing two years in Switzerland, and making the tour of all the cantons, Mr. Clifford proceeded with his daughter to Italy; where, I believe, they staid nine months, and returned through France to England about the time that young Mr. Clifford left the

university, and soon after went on his travels to France and other foreign countries. You say it is reported that Miss Clifford looks very like a French woman; as for my own part, I can neither confirm nor refute this report, having never had any personal experience of French women. Indeed I never saw any, knowing them to be such, except one who danced on the tight-rope at Sadlers-Wells when I was last in London. She was, to be sure, remarkably nimble; but as for her taste in dress (begging pardon for differing in opinion from you), I must confess I did not much admire it. I therefore think you are much in the right in choosing to look like an English woman: as for my own part, I cannot conceive any human creature more beautiful than Miss Clifford was after she returned to England.—You will please to remember, my dear Miss Almond, that the present company are always excepted.

I ought to have mentioned before, that the sedentary manner of life which Mr. Clifford

adopted, immediately after the death of his lady, had so much affected his health, that he was directed to ride several hours every day; and, as he could not bear to be deprived of the company of his daughter, she generally accompanied him: by which means she became an expert and fearless rider; which, when her father perceived, he resumed what had formerly been his favourite diversion, and his daughter sometimes accompanied him when he went out with the hounds. This I do suppose is the only foundation for the report that has reached your ears of her going a-hunting with men, and which I suspect to have been propagated by evil-disposed persons; for how can we otherwise account for the plural *men* being adopted instead of the singular *man*, and the omitting to mention that the man was her father?

I cannot help remarking, my dear miss, that you make no inquiry concerning the pecuniary circumstances in which Mr. Clifford left his family. This I suspect to be an omis-

sion on your part, which I will now supply, to prevent your being put to the trouble of writing another letter for information on that essential article. Mr. Clifford was possessed of a landed estate of near three thousand pounds a year, and of a considerable sum in the public funds. Twenty thousand pounds of which was intended for his daughter's portion, and all the rest of his fortune for his son.

I am sorry to add that the son behaved very imprudently (for he is the exception alluded to at the beginning of this letter). Notwithstanding the generous allowance he had from his father, this thoughtless young man contracted much debt before he had been full two years abroad.

Mr. Clifford desired him to give in a list of all his debts, which were immediately paid. This exhausted all that Mr. Clifford had in the funds, except the twenty thousand pounds which he had by will destined for his daughter's portion, and which he had

determined should not be affected by the son's extravagance.

This young man from his childhood had given signs of a head-strong impetuous disposition, and he was naturally endowed with uncommon strength and agility of body. The first often engaged him in quarrels with his companions at Westminster-school; and the second obtained him the victory very frequently, when, in strict justice, he deserved to have been beaten. And perhaps this was the origin, or laid the foundation, of that proud and haughty temper which he has since manifested in various instances, which I could recapitulate if it were necessary. But hypocrisy and deceit formed no part of this young man's character; therefore, his having got a physician to write a false statement of his health to his father, and his having pretended that the air of Naples was requisite for a disorder in his breast, when he really was passing the carnival at Venice, surprised every body; but it was afterwards known that

those devices were the suggestions of a certain lady, who shall be nameless, who was at Venice at that time, and whom I have heard called a woman of easy virtue, in my opinion by a misnomer; for I strongly suspect that, notwithstanding her rank, she was in reality a woman of no virtue at all. It also appeared that he had given a false statement of his debts, for he actually owed five thousand pounds about a year after all was supposed to have been cleared.

Mr. Clifford was shocked at his son's extravagance, and still more at this deceit; and, on account of those and other instances of his son's ill-conduct, he threatened to disinherit him, and leave his whole fortune to his daughter, with the exception of a moderate annuity, to be placed in the hands of trustees, for the young man's use. This would have taken place, had it not been for the repeated solicitations of miss Clifford; by which she prevailed on her father to pay all the debts, by taking up a mortgage of five thousand

pounds, part of what had been secured for her own patrimony. Without the knowledge of his daughter, however, he made a new will, and burdened his estate with this five thousand pounds, as a debt due to her at his death.

The ill-conduct of his son greatly affected not only the spirits, but also the health of Mr. Clifford, which declined visibly, in spite of the medical skill of those who attended him. Miss Clifford, being greatly alarmed, proposed that he should go to London, and put himself under the care of the most celebrated physicians there. The practitioners in the North thought this improper, because of the fatigue of the journey, which, they said, would be attended with great danger: and they also hinted, that he would receive no benefit from the prescriptions of the London doctors. Mr. Clifford himself was averse to the journey; but, perceiving that it would afford satisfaction to his daughter, he resolved to set out. I accompanied them to the me-

tropolis.—So far from being the worse for the journey, he grew evidently better all the time we were on the road. But though the northern practitioners were mistaken in thinking that the journey would do *harm*, they were right in their other prognostic, that the prescriptions of the London physicians would do *no good*. Indeed it is a very singular circumstance, in this case, that the patient should have mended as soon as he was taken from the care of the doctors in the country, and that he should have grown worse soon after he was put under the care of those of the town. This seems altogether unaccountable.—Mr. Clifford died about a month after his arrival in London. One of those practitioners who attended him in Northumberland has since assured me that he would infallibly have recovered if he had remained in the country under his care. I concealed this very carefully from Miss Clifford, as it would have augmented her grief, which was already excessive. I was at one time apprehensive that

it would have thrown her into the same complaint of which her father died.

I really believe she was saved from this by the friendly and affectionate behaviour of lady Diana Franklin, a woman of extraordinary good sense, who was the only person miss Clifford could bear to converse with for a considerable time after her father's death. Lady Diana had been the intimate companion of her mother, had always lived in great friendship with her father, and loved the young lady herself with the affection of a mother.

She has a very pleasant house, within twenty miles of London, to which she carried miss Clifford, and where they remained for several months without seeing any company, except miss Juliet Fortescue, an intimate friend and school-companion of miss Clifford. This young lady was a very considerable heiress; and she has since bestowed her hand and fortune more wisely than many heiresses do, being now the wife of colonel Sommers, a brave

officer, with whom she lives most happily at her estate in the bishopric of Durham.

Lady Diana Franklin is not only a woman of extraordinary good sense, which I told you before ; but, which I did not tell you before, she is also of a very cheerful and sociable disposition, notwithstanding that she is an old maid : for, as I have already remarked more than once, there is no rule without an exception.

As she still is a very agreeable-looking woman, and was very handsome in her youth, it seems surprising that she has remained unmarried ; yet I have known other women of that description who never had an offer of marriage in their life : but lady Diana had a very ample patrimony besides ; and I confess I never knew a woman of this description who had not a great many.

Though your inquiries are confined to the Clifford family, yet, as I have mentioned this worthy lady, I will add another circumstance concerning her, which, I dare say, you will

think interesting, notwithstanding that it occurred many years ago. At the age of twenty-two, lady Diana was actually betrothed to a young man of rank and of very great expectation; he was seized with a fever, of which he died on the very day that had been fixed for their marriage.

One of your tender disposition, my dear miss Almond, will naturally sympathise with a woman, though a stranger, on so severe a misfortune. It is said that, in the violence of her affliction, she determined never to marry. This is not so extraordinary as that she should have adhered to her resolution, notwithstanding her having been often solicited to depart from it. She did not, however, remain very long in absolute retirement, but returned to the society of those whose friendship she had formerly cultivated; for, as lady Horatia once told me, "though her friend lady Diana's heart was, by this cruel event, for ever shut against love, it was still open to friendship."—She lived, accordingly,

in the most intimate friendship with lady Horatia and Mr. Clifford until their death ; after which, all the tender attachment she had for the parents was devolved on the daughter ; and her parental solicitude to prevent the young lady from becoming a prey to continued sorrow was crowned with success. She was gradually brought to bear company, and to join in conversation. I do not take upon me to assert, however, that time did not assist the endeavours of lady Diana in alleviating the sorrow of miss Clifford ; for time is a great destroyer of grief, as well as of other things, as I myself experienced since the death of my wife.

What may seem to you very singular is, that, although this young lady is generally cheerful, and sometimes in very high spirits, yet she can seldom refrain from tears, and always is seized with a fit of melancholy, when the name of her father is mentioned. There are people who insinuate that this proceeds from affectation, because she is able to re-

fume her natural gaiety soon after ; but those people certainly mistake her character, which is above affectation : and I should think they also mistake human-nature in general ; for is not the life of man a tragi-comedy ? At least it is still so in England ; though I am told, indeed, that in France it has been of late a continued tragedy.

Young Mr. Clifford returned to England when he heard of his father's death ; at which, from what I have hinted already, perhaps you may imagine he would feel little concern : but in that you would do him wrong ; for though this young man had been inconsiderate and headstrong enough to disoblige and vex his father when alive, he was not hardened enough not to feel sorrow and remorse, therefore, after his death.

Though his sorrow was sharp, however, it was not lasting : the company he imprudently kept effaced it too soon, and he returned to foreign countries, where he now is. It is to

be hoped that he will reform, for he is still young.

Having now, with as little prolixity as the nature of the case would admit, answered your inquiries in a manner which, I make no doubt, will be satisfactory both to yourself and your noble correspondent, I shall, for brevity's sake, only add, that I am glad that you have experienced so much benefit from young Dr. Ironside's pills. As for my own part, I have had an opposite experience, being now convinced that my own state of health is not so vigorous as I thought it, though as much so as most men of my age.

Of this, however, you may always rely, that you will find me disposed to render every service in my power, not only to my old acquaintance your aunt, but also to yourself.

I beg you will make my affectionate respects to her. I hope the redness in her nose, with a tendency to purple, for which she was taking the infusion of white poppy

flowers, has the desired effect. My anxiety for my old friend induced me to take the opinion of a very experienced practitioner of this place ; and he assured me, that, if it did no good, it could do no harm ; which is more than can be said for some medicines much vaunted.

I shall now, for brevity's sake, finish this long epistle ; being,

My dear young lady,

With due esteem,

Your well-wisher, and most obedient
humble servant,

DANIEL PROCTOR.

P. S. There is no foundation for the report of my intending to remove from my own quiet habitation near Morpeth to such a tumultuous town as London ; and there is as little for the report of my daughter's marriage. It will be time enough for her to think of a husband when she comes to be a little nearer your age, which, if I am to judge by looks, she still wants two, or perhaps three, years of.

LETTER XLIX.

Miss ALMOND to DANIEL PROCTOR, Esq.

SIR,

York.

I AM sorry you have given yourself the trouble of writing so very long a letter; all I wished any information about might have been mentioned in a few lines: but I suppose you were fond of an opportunity of enlarging upon the wonderful qualities of this same miss Clifford, whom you seem to be in love with, though such a thing is scarcely credible to those who know of the declarations you made when you were last at York. I cannot conceive what you saw in my looks that could lead you into so gross a mistake with respect to my age: but though I must confess that I am much younger than you think, I hope I should have more sense, at any age, than to play old mournful tunes upon a harp to my father when he was in affliction, which could

only serve to increase his grief; and far less could I return immediately to gaiety after shedding tears, which you say miss Clifford did, as if her father's death had been a tragedy.

I am glad to hear that you are inclined to believe that English women are the handsomest in this world (indeed the curate of Willow-Bank once told me that there was no reason to doubt of their being the same in the next), which makes your partiality for this miss Clifford the more surprising, because she seems, even from your own account, more like a foreigner than an English woman.

As I hinted, in my letter to you, that the person for whom I was desirous of getting an account of the Clifford family had reason to be prejudiced against them, and was a person of quality, I could not imagine that you would have sent a long letter of the nature of your last; for you must have observed that people of quality never listen to long letters; indeed they cannot bear to be informed of any

thing, long or short, that is not agreeable to their wishes.

I first remarked this at the house of a fine London lady, a near relation of lord Deanport, who was allowed to die quietly, because, to have insinuated that she was in danger, or to have proposed a drug that was disagreeable to her taste, would have alarmed and disturbed her. Two of the chamber-maids recovered from the same disease, by taking the bark, and being blistered; for the apothecary, who was all smiles and simpers when he spoke to the poor dying lady, and never gave her any thing but palatable draughts, told *them*, with a grave countenance, and in plain words, that nothing but blisters, and large doses of bark, could save them.

I have remarked, also, that the curate at Willow-Bank, who in winter preaches to the country-people about preparing for death, never touches on that subject in summer, when my lady is present, because nothing is

so offensive to her ladyship as reminding her of death, except it be mentioning hell, which she says her nerves cannot bear.

Indeed I was witness myself to the truth of this ; for her ladyship once carried me, for a frolic, to hear a methodist-preacher : unluckily, the man preached about the rich man and Lazarus, which terrified her to such a degree, that she was carried out in violent hysterics : and though, formerly, she made it a rule to go to church once every season, to show a good example to the ignorant vulgar, yet, after that accident, she never ventured to hear any preacher whatever, except the curate of Willow-Bank, on whose discretion she can rely, because his only hope of preferment is in her ladyship. And I once heard my lady herself say, “ that, notwithstanding his being only a country-curate, he might be a London bishop, for knowledge of the world.”

Now, perhaps, you will say, like Juba in the play of Cato—“ If knowledge of the

world makes man a villain, may Juba ever remain in ignorance."—But, although such sentiments do very well in tragedies, they are not to be acted upon in real life: besides, Juba being only a black, is not a very fit example for whites, especially Christians.

I own I see no villainy in having a knowledge of this world, and making the most of it while we are in it, though it may be proper to act otherwise in the next; for, as I have heard you yourself observe—"When we are at Rome, we must do as Rome does."

You see, Sir, I do not forget the reflections I have heard you make, having always had a very high opinion of your sense and judgment; which made me so fond of your company when I saw you last at York, and makes me regret that we have never seen you since: but I suppose you can think of nobody, now, but miss Clifford; though I own that she, nor no other woman, can be more concerned than I am to hear that you are in

a weaker state of health than when we saw you here. My aunt thinks that your being of that opinion proceeds entirely from low spirits, owing to too much solitude; and that, if you saw more society, whether it were in London or York, or even at your own house near Morpeth, you would be more healthful and happier. Though your daughter is, I am told, a very beautiful young lady, and also very sensible, yet perhaps some cheerful companion would render both your lives more agreeable; but of that you are the best judge.—My aunt desires me to return you her thanks for the attention you had to her, in consulting the doctor on her complaint.

The infusion of the flowers of white poppies has had no great effect as yet; but she is resolved to continue, because, she says, it stands to reason that those flowers should do good, on account of their whiteness: but I fear their colour is considerably altered before they come to her nose.

With my kindest compliments to miss
Proctor, though unknown but by character,

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient and
obliged servant,

MARGARET ALMOND,

I shall be very glad to hear from you when
you have leisure: but you need not give
yourself the trouble of saying any thing far-
ther of the Clifford family, because the *noble-*
man who applied to me has now received all
the information she wanted.

LETTER L.

Miss ALMOND to the COUNTESS of DEANPORT.

MY LADY,

York.

I HAD the honour of informing your ladyship, in my last letter, that I had, without delaying a single moment, written to Mr. Proctor. It was natural for your ladyship to think that his resentment against young Mr. Clifford would have enraged him against the whole family, and inclined him to divulge every thing he knew or suspected to their disadvantage: but he is an odd kind of a particular man, who knows no more of the world, particularly the genteel, than a child. Though he served an apprenticeship to an attorney, he has the character never to have taken the advantage of any body; which makes it so unaccountable how he is in such good circumstances. He seems to have no resentment; or else the favours he received

from Clifford, the father, makes him forget the injuries of the son, and renders him unwilling to say any thing against him, and still less his sister: yet, in spite of all his pains to set her off to advantage in his letter to me, it is easy to see that the character you have received of her is pretty exact. There is no doubt that she both looks and acts like a French woman; and you know how some of them act. Mr. Proctor acknowledges that she lived several years abroad among foreigners and emigrants, and understands all their languages; and, I dare say, is a member of the Blue-stocking-club of learned women, whom your ladyship hates, though she may wear white stockings above her blue.

Mr. Proctor also owns, that miss Clifford was addicted to go a-hunting with men in the day-time, and playing on the harp to them at night. What she did besides he does not mention.

He pretends to be ignorant of the reason of her father's taking her abroad so suddenly,

and does not divulge the nature of the rumours that were spread over the neighbourhood on that occasion.

But he acknowledges that miss Clifford lives in intimacy with lady Diana Franklin, which must be the same with her that your ladyship hates so much, and who I take to be one of the most censorious old maids living; both on that account, and from what I heard counsellor Banter say, at the last York assizes, in a large company of ladies, at a tea-drinking, (among whom was a Londoner, on her return from Scotland, where she had fled from her parents to be married to a very genteel officer of dragoons—I believe he was quarter-master),—so, somebody saying something to the praise of lady Diana, the new-married lady observed that she was an old maid, and of course very censorious. “Very censorious, indeed, madam,” replied the counsellor; “her whole life and conduct is a libel on many of her own sex!”

This was thought, by some of the com-

pany, too severe ; but, after what I have heard your ladyship say of her, is, I am convinced, no more than she deserves.

This is all the intelligence I could procure from Mr. Proctor, which I hope your ladyship will think satisfactory, as it may be depended on. But I am certain, that if I was in London, I could procure still more ; and therefore I have informed my aunt, that she would probably receive a letter from your ladyship, desiring that I might set out very soon. For my own part, I should not be in the least afraid of going in the mail-coach, as it goes so quick ; and my heavy trunk might come afterwards in the waggon.—In the hope of having the honour of another letter from your ladyship soon,

I am,

Your ladyship's most obedient, faithful,

and obliged humble servant,

MARGARET ALMOND.

P.S. I have taken particular care that your ladyship cannot be suspected of having set me on those inquiries, for I wrote to Mr. Proctor that they were not for a lady, but for a noble-man.

LETTER LL.

*The Countess of DEANPORT to JAMES
GRINDILL, Esq.*

London.

I HAVE had no need to avail myself of your precautions against communicating Peggy Almond's discoveries respecting miss Clifford too abruptly to my son. She discovered nothing but what was either of so innocent, or so general, a nature, that no use could be made of it. I have therefore abstained from all insinuations against what is called—her virtue. But, in consequence of your observations respecting my son's prejudice against clever women, or women of superior understanding, which I know to be well founded, I once thought of culling a few witticisms from Joe Miller, and repeating them to lord Deanport as repartees of miss Clifford; but recollecting that his lordship was better acquainted with that book than with most

others, I judged it would be safer to draw from a fountain into which he never dipped; and, after having spoken of miss Clifford as a lady of uncommon erudition and sagacity, I actually repeated two of the proverbs of Solomon as observations of hers. This had not the effect I expected; he saw nothing alarmingly sagacious in either, and said, "If miss Clifford can make no wiser observations than those, she runs no risk of being drowned for a witch."

Disappointed in this, I remarked "that I had heard she was a young woman of rather an imperious temper; that I was not sufficiently acquainted with her to decide, but I owned that she had, on some occasions, a great deal of fire in her looks."

To this he coolly replied, "That she had certainly an animated countenance, and he believed she was a young lady of spirit."

I was so provoked by this answer, that I rejoined, with warmth, "If spirit be what you admire in her, she will show you enough

of it—I am told she is a complete termagant. How she may accommodate herself to her lovers I know not; but I am assured that her obstinate temper broke her father's heart."

To this he made no reply; but, after a few minutes of musing, introduced another subject, and in a short time left me.

I hope what I threw out was the cause of his musing. I shall take care to furnish him with more seeds of reflection of the same kind, and I have a notion that the lady herself will also supply him with some.

I have observed, with pleasure, that she does not behave with that degree of attention to him that would, I believe, secure her conquest. I am happy that her supreme adviser, lady Diana Franklin, is absent; because, were she in London, she would advise the young lady to adopt a plan of conduct that would be more likely to succeed. Where do you think her ladyship is?—You never can devise, therefore I'll tell you.—But I am interrupted, and must postpone the information.

This cousin of yours drags on a most unreasonable length. How can the man have the conscience to live so long? What are his physicians about? Those country doctors have not half the dispatch of their brethren in the capital.

Yours,

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER LII.

The Same to the Same.

London.

I WAS interrupted when I was just about to inform you where lady Diana Franklin (to the great grief of the blue-stocking tribe, those admirers of madame de Sevigné and her associates, who attempt to substitute conversation to cards) is at present—Why, in Devonshire. Devonshire at this season of the year! And whom do you think she has gone to visit in Devonshire? Some *grateful* young officer, you will guess, promoted by her interest, and whose regiment is quartered in that county. You may have hit on the *real* motive of her journey for ought I know—but the avowed one is to see Mrs. Denham. Perhaps you have forgot Mrs. Denham, for she has not been heard of these several years; but you must remember the sprightly Charlotte Brigh-

ton, whom you have so often seen at my assemblies, when her beauty and vivacity drew half the young fellows in town after her.

I believe you were at Spa when the catastrophe of Charlotte's romance took place, and therefore may never have heard it. After rejecting two offers of marriage, both highly advantageous; one by a Mr.—Mr.—I cannot recollect the man's name—an awkward-looking creature.—He has been made a peer since—I cannot recollect his title neither—no matter. The other proposal was from a person whose fortune gave him a claim to the same honour. He offered immense settlements—to no purpose—the giddy girl refused them both.

What made her folly the more to be lamented, and must have filled her with remorse for refusing the latter, is, that the man died about nine months after. Some people attempt to excuse her, by asserting that she was in love with Tom Denham when those two men paid her their addresses. I leave

you to determine the weight of such an apology.

She afterwards married Tom, who was, to be sure, one of the best-natured, gay, thoughtless young fellows in the world, but with a very moderate fortune ; one half of which was mortgaged before Charlotte was acquainted with him ; the remainder, with all his wife's patrimony, he spent, it must be confessed, entirely like a gentleman, and in the best company. When it *was* spent, however, he and his wife seemed, for some time, as destitute of friends as if they had kept the worst.

An old companion of his, who had some interest with the minister, procured him at last a situation in the East Indies. It was expected he would have opportunities of pilaging a competency for his poor wife and children. But though few people could spend a fortune with a better grace than Tom, it is doubtful whether he had any talents for acquiring one : the experiment, however, was

not fairly made ; for he died, poor fellow, soon after his arrival in India, so that he had not time to do that justice to his family that was expected, however well-disposed he might have been.

His widow, with two children, lived some time in London after the accounts of his death arrived. Hitherto I had visited her occasionally ; but rumours were circulated to her prejudice: as she had always been rather inattentive to appearances, they gained strength, I have been assured, without foundation : but as I had not leisure to ascertain the truth, I thought it prudent to leave off visiting her. Others followed my example ; and she would, most probably, have been forsaken by all her female acquaintance, had not the virgin Diana arrived precisely at that time from abroad. Though she had seen less of Mrs. Denham, after her marriage, than any of her former companions—for the rapid rate at which her husband and she drove through life ill-suited the slow and solemn step of a Vestal—yet, on

finding Charlotte likely to be abandoned by others, she clung to her through sheer vanity, and that crossness which prompts her in what she calls *essentials*, to brave the opinion of the world. She pretended that she had investigated the scandalous reports; and not only to have found them false, but also that Mrs. Denham, having derived prudence from her misfortunes, had conducted herself in a most exemplary manner, devoting her whole attention to the education of her children: on which she was visited and received as before by a few of her old acquaintance; but her circumstances kept the greater part from her as completely as if all that had been said of her was true. Unable, however, to maintain her family in London, she retired with her children to Devonshire, and has hardly ever been thought of since, till lady Diana, hearing that she was in a declining state of health, set out lately to visit her; and there I hope she will remain; for I understand she has more influence with miss Clifford than any

body else, and, if she were in London, would assuredly engage her *protège* to adopt a conduct more likely than that she follows at present to secure the heart of my son. To tell you the truth, I rely more on the marked coldness and indifference which the girl shows for him than on all I have hitherto been able to contrive for the purpose of giving him a thorough dislike to her.

In the mean time, you cannot figure how I am harassed by the murmurs of the aunt on account of Deanport's coldness to miss Moyston; for she is more enraged than the young lady herself. I am also vexed by the new proofs I daily receive of his growing passion for miss Clifford.—Would to heaven you were here! I never stood in need of your sage counsels so much.

E. DEANPORT.

LETTER LIII.

Miss HORATIA CLIFFORD to Mrs. SOMMERS.

London.

You are seriously hurt, then, my dear, because I have never said a word of lord Deanport's attentions to me, of which, it seems, some more communicative correspondent has favoured you with so many particulars. You consider it as an instance of unkind reserve to a friend, whose confidence in me has been unbounded. I dare swear you suspected, that in this season, so fertile in peerages, I was endeavouring, while the sun shone, to secure, for my own use, part of the harvest; and that, having succeeded, I meant to be suddenly announced to you as countess of Deanport, to dazzle your eyes with the brilliancy of my coronet, and mortify your heart with the idea of an old companion raised to a situation so far above you.

Ah! Juliet, how could you suspect me of such malice? Had I been capable of it, I should have deserved all that your friend miss — suffered, by being made a duchess.

Now, in answer to your accusation,

“ I will a round unvarnished tale deliver,

Of what reserve, deceit, or mighty plot

(For such proceedings I am charged withal),

I have been guilty.” —

The first time I ever saw lord Deanport was at the duchess of —’s assembly. I was sitting between my aunt and Mrs. Demure, when her grace presented him to me: he remained with us till we left the room. As he was an acquaintance of Mrs. Demure, I placed this piece of attention to her account. I afterwards met him at other assemblies: he sometimes came into my aunt’s box at the opera. I saw nothing particular in this, nor did I perceive any thing remarkable in his lordship’s address, except an affectation to whisper, which I discouraged by a look of surprise, and by always answering aloud. Most people, who are uncommonly hand-

some and genteel, are thought conceited; sometimes, no doubt, unjustly: but there certainly is nothing in lord Deanport's manner that tends to remove such a suspicion.

There is somewhat of constraint that could not have been expected in a man of his rank who has travelled; this is accompanied with a stately kind of obsequiousness, a protecting bow, often repeated, which seems to proceed from pride, and that species of pride that springs from high birth, without the consciousness of any other superiority: for, when a person is also conscious of being superior, or even equal to the company in other respects, it generally produces more ease, and less reserve.

His lordship, however, cultivated an acquaintance with Mr. Darnley and my aunt: I saw him of course. His visits becoming more assiduous, she one day told me, with an air of great satisfaction, that I had certainly made a conquest of the young peer. I was by no means so much convinced of this as she seemed to be; and it would not have afforded

me so much satisfaction if I had. I confess I did not think it worth while to mention this notion of my aunt in my letters to you; but pray, my dear, if they are not already burnt, will you take the trouble to look over them again, and see if, trifling as they are, they do not treat of subjects of just as much importance?

Yet, since you show a partiality for this, I will give you a little more of it. I could not help remarking, that the noble lord's mother, the countess of Deanport, to whom, I believe, I was hardly known till very lately, seemed to view me with an evil eye: this I should have borne without complaining. I knew that people are sometimes offended without reason: I also knew that people of rank are as subject to this weakness as the lowest vulgar; but I did not know that they could manifest it in the same manner:—lady Deanport made this clear to me.—My uncle's relation, Mrs. Courtney, had carried me to lady A——'s assembly. Towards the end of

the night, after she had ordered up the carriage, she recollected something she wished to mention to her ladyship, and went, for that purpose, into another room, leaving me seated opposite to miss Moyston, the great heiress, and her aunt. In that instant, lady Deanport came, and seated herself between them; then, fixing her eyes on me, she whispered them in a very significant manner. They turned their eyes also upon me, tittering, and sometimes laughing aloud. The company had left the side of the room in which I sat, so that I was in a very awkward situation, the eyes of every body being directed towards me, by the rudeness of these three women. Had they addressed any discourse to me, perhaps I might have made some retort; but I could neither object to their laughing, nor their looking at me. Old general Randal, who was playing at whist, observing my distress, laid down his cards, came to me, said he believed Mrs. Courtney waited for me, and led me into another

room, where she was talking with the duchess of D——. “Your young friend was impatient to see you, madam,” said he, to Mrs. Courtney: then, addressing the duchess, he added—“Your grace has been accustomed to find great beauty an object of envy: had you been in the next room, you would have seen it, for the first time, the object of laughter.”—This behaviour of the general is more in the style of the old than the new court. But you will allow, that what applied to her grace was more than mere compliment; particularly when, on the duchess’s accosting me, with her usual condescension, he added—“No one ever experienced a happier transition from malice to benevolence than the lady your grace takes by the hand.”

I was at a loss to find out in what I had offended those women, particularly the Moysons, with whom I am not acquainted.

Mrs. Demure (I believe you are acquainted with that lady) called on my aunt the following day. My aunt being abroad, she

stayed great part of the forenoon with me. She is at once considered as the friend of lady Deanport and of the Moystons. I hinted to her what had happened at the assembly. She smiled, and said—"I could easily give you the key to that cabinet of secrets, my dear, if it were proper."

"If it is not proper, I beg not to be entrusted with it," I replied.

Finding that I pressed her no farther—"Come," resumed she, "I believe I may safely trust you. My friend, lady Deanport, is one of the most prudent women on the face of the earth, and one of the most attentive of mothers. She naturally wishes her son to obtain a great fortune by marriage, because she considers his interest to be also hers, and has been using all her address to promote one between her son and miss Moyston: but the young lady and her aunt having taken offence at the attention her son shows you, her ladyship is alarmed, lest it should prove an obstacle to a scheme her heart is greatly set

on ; on which account she is irritated, and disposed to mortify you. This is certainly beneath a woman of her rank ; indeed of even a plebeian, of any degree of elevation of soul. But the best of people have their weaknesses ; and, I must confess, my friend is not entirely exempt from them." She afterwards repeated some very spiteful things that she had heard lady Deanport say of me ; begging me, at the same time, not to mind them. She then added some expressions, equally malicious, which she had heard her utter, concerning lady Diana. This, I do assure you, provoked me more than the other ; and I resolved to vex the malicious woman in the only way in my power.—
" You ought not, my dear miss Clifford," said Mrs. Demure, " to be provoked at my friend, lady Deanport : it is not from ill-will against you, or lady Diana, that she speaks so ; it is merely because she fears that you will seduce the heart of her son from miss

Moyston : she cannot bear the loss of all that great fortune. She expects, if her son were in possession of it, that she herself would be much more easy in her own circumstances. My friend is fond of money—very fond of money : it is her greatest fault :—she has it in common with many worthy people. She is also exceedingly fond of play ; and, though in other respects a shrewd sensible woman, superstitious to childishness on that subject. Indeed, the whims that very acute people are influenced by, in gaming, are hardly credible. I must do my friend the justice to say, however, that she is not in the least superstitious in religious matters, except when she is in ill health. Her enemies accuse her of being avaricious, and extremely fond of money ; but that is, in a great measure, owing to her often losing at play. I am persuaded, that if she were always to win, she would be more generous : but what can a woman do who frequently loses more than

she can pay? Her son cannot always supply her, which makes her so set on his marriage with miss Moyston."

This eloquent and friendly harangue had no effect in turning me from the resolution I had formed; and which I found an opportunity of putting in practice, very soon after, at the duchess's, where lord Deanport accosted me, in the presence of his mother and her two accomplices. I listened to the *douceurs* he whispered in my ear with an air of far more complaisance than I had ever before shown. They endeavoured to conceal their vexation by writhings and constrained smiles,—such as a person on the rack, if he thought himself obliged to smile, might exhibit. I hope I was more successful in *my* smiles; though, I confess, they were forced also; but I was determined to look as pleased as possible.

After I had teased the three ladies sufficiently, I told my aunt that I felt myself a

little indisposed ; which was really the case : for you have no idea how fatiguing it is to be continually constraining one's features into a simper when they have all the inclination in the world to be indulged in a yawn. My aunt withdrew immediately. My lord attended us to the carriage ; and, as he was leading me past her ladyship and the heiress, I could not help enjoying the rage that was apparent on the countenance of the one, and the mortification in that of the other.

The marchioness is still at Richmond. Her friends will not part with her. I drove there yesterday, in the intention to wheedle her from them : but what chance has an English woman to get the better of the French in the art of wheedling ? They prevailed on her to stay, in spite of all my skill. She promises, however, to come to London after her return from Bath, where the lady intends to carry her.

Lady Diana is in good health and spirits. Poor Mrs. Denham, she informs me, is somewhat better.

Adieu ! my sweet friend. Do not forget to present my love—I mean my respects, to your husband.

H. CLIFFORD.

LETTER LIV.

Mrs. SOMMERS to Miss H. CLIFFORD.

Ashwood.

I SHOULD be seriously displeased, indeed, my dear Horatia, if you could suspect that seeing a coronet on your head would raise the least particle of envy in my heart. Have I not been sensible of your superiority, in almost every accomplishment, without any sentiment but that of increasing affection? The woman who, having some pretensions to beauty, perceives that another is considered in every company as handsomer than herself, and yet retains the warmest friendship for that other, is assuredly incapable of repining at any other species of superiority she may have. I can never love you better, my dear, than I do at present, when you are only a plain spinster: but you may rely upon it I should not love you less though you were raised to the rank of

duchess to-morrow. I wish you to be my equal, my dear, in nothing but in happiness; and that, because I believe no woman can be happier than I am.

I am much obliged to you for your "round unvarnished tale," which has amused me very much; and, in return, I will give you a piece of advice. People do not remain long in debt when they can pay their creditors in this manner. Besides, I am entitled to give you advice:—am I not a full year older than you? and am I not a married woman? Listen, therefore, to the voice of a matron; for "Wisdom dwelleth with Age."

I would not have you put implicit faith in the information you received from Mrs. Demure. Can you put confidence in a person who, calling herself lady Deanport's friend, spoke of her in the style she did?

Her ladyship may love money too well; but I have heard that Mrs. Demure is hypocritical and revengeful, which are worse faults. She once showed a disposition to form an in-

timacy with me ; but my husband gave me a hint not to encourage it. I believe he knows more of her history than he chooses to communicate. I shall never ask him a question on that, or any other subject he is disposed to avoid.

But I wish, my dear Horatia, that you would forego the resolution of tormenting lady Deanport. What was represented to you was probably exaggerated, perhaps entirely without foundation ; and, at any rate, declaring yourself her enemy will make her more actively yours, and justifies her in some degree for being so, and can do no good. Besides, my dear, I cannot approve of the means you have used to vex her. In my humble opinion, you ought to be open with the young lord. Since you are determined not to have him, you ought to tell him so at once. No woman can be more decisive than you when you please. A young woman may be forgiven for not saying *aye* to the man she loves, when he first proposes marriage to her ; but

there is no excuse for not saying *no*, in the most unequivocal manner, to him she is determined to reject, should he make the same proposal. On reflection, I am certain you will be of my opinion, and will act accordingly.

My husband sends you his respectful love.

I remain, dear Horatia,

ever most affectionately yours,

JULIET SOMMERS.

LETTER LV.

Miss HORATIA CLIFFORD to Mrs. SOMMERS.

London.

WITHOUT waiting for an answer to a letter I wrote to you two days since, as my aunt is engaged for the evening, I will endeavour to amuse you, my dear, with a curious conversation, which I overheard last night at Mrs. Courtney's.

She generally keeps one room entirely clear of card-tables, where they who decline playing may converse, without disturbing or being disturbed by the players.

When my aunt's party was made up, I went into that room with lady Blunt, a young lady, her niece, whom she wished to make me acquainted with. — Mrs. Demure soon after seated herself by me, with two other ladies; and several gentlemen stood around us,

Your husband's friend, Mr. Mordaunt, was mentioned.

"I understand," said sir George Topley, "that he is at his brother's in Hampshire, and expected in town soon."

"When he comes, George," said lady Blunt, "you will do well to retire to the country."

"Why so?" the baronet asked.

"Because," replied she, "copies appear to disadvantage when placed near the original."

This remark raised a laugh, in which its rudeness would have prevented me from joining, had not the baronet himself laughed as much as any body, without making any other reply, except saying—"All the world knows that your ladyship is a wit;" and then laughed more heartily than before.

"There is no great wit, George," rejoined lady Blunt, "in remarking what is obvious to all the town: but, in my opinion, you had better choose another model; for

there are people, and good judges too, who think Mr. Mordaunt inimitable." As she pronounced this, she fixed Mrs. Demure, who affected to take no notice, till lady Blunt added—"Do not you think so, madam? You know the gentleman."

"Know him!" said Mrs. Demure, with affected indifference, but evident emotion—"a man who is *every*-where must be, in some degree, known to *every*-body; but I know very little of the man, and only as a common acquaintance."

"Nay, now, my dear madam, I own you surprise me," said lady Blunt; "for I could have sworn that any woman who knew him at all would have thought him rather an *uncommon* acquaintance."

"I do not understand what your ladyship means by an *uncommon* acquaintance," rejoined Mrs. Demure, a little sharply.

"I mean," said lady Blunt, "an acquaintance with one of the most accomplished men in England."

Mr. Clement, the clergyman, thinking the dialogue was in danger of becoming too warm, and with the sole view, as I am convinced, to prevent that, and give it a pleasanter turn, said—"Your ladyship needed not have confined yourself to England; you might have added *Scotland, and even the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.*" Then observing a Mr. MacDonald, who had risen from one of the card-tables, and joined our circle, he added—"I hope the addition might have been made without offence to any of the company."

"As you seem to direct this to me, sir," said the Scot, "I must inform you that I am neither apt to take offence where it is not intended, nor to pass it over when it is."

"In the present case," replied Mr. Clement, "you must be sensible that none could be intended."

"Without accurately examining what *could* be," resumed the other, "I am willing to take it for granted that none was intended; and I am the more disposed so to do on account

of your being a clergyman ; for I honour the profession, chiefly, indeed, because my own father belonged to it."

" You are extremely obliging, sir," said Mr. Clement, bowing.

" It is always my intention to be obliging, sir," replied Macdonald.—" But to return to the original assertion made by her ladyship ; namely, ' that Mr. Mordaunt was one of the most accomplished men in England,' to which you said that she might have added Scotland, (as for Berwick-upon-Tweed I leave it out of the argument, as a neutral),—I must observe that the assertion might be just simply as her ladyship made it, without its being equally so conjoined to your appendage."

The precise manner in which this was pronounced, as well as the terms, seemed to put all the company in a gay humour.—Mr. Clement replied, with a smile, " that it possibly might be so."

" I only speak of possibility, sir. To say the thing is probable, though that may be

my own private opinion, would not be civil in this company: but I must add, that I have heard the gentleman in question spoken of by the gallant colonel Sommers, under whom I served, in such terms as convince me that he is a very accomplished, as well as a very brave man."

"I have heard Mr. Mordaunt accused of being a very *romantic* character," said lady Blunt's niece.

Her ladyship has this young lady much with her to prevent her from being witness to the discord that exists between her father and mother.—She is, I am told, a great reader of romances, particularly the ancient.

"Mr. Mordaunt being of a romantic character, my dear, will appear no heinous accusation in your eyes," answered the aunt:—

"Like the heroes of romance, he is always in love; and, like them too, he never marries: but he has not the least resemblance to the *preux chevaliers* in constancy—he is ra-

ther addicted to change, to the great affliction of some distressed damsels."

As she said this, she glanced at Mrs. Demure, who seemed again a little disconcerted.

"But the heroes of romance," resumed the young lady, "*do* marry at the end."

"Yes, my dear," said lady Blunt, "as you justly observe, *at the end*; for, when the man marries, he is no longer a hero, and his mistress still less a heroine; they become plain husband and wife, just like your papa and mamma."

"Gracious me!" exclaimed the young lady, spreading her hands, and casting up her eyes.

"Though Mordaunt's romance is not likely to come to so humiliating a conclusion," resumed lady Blunt, "it was very near being cut short in Italy, when he served in the Austrian armies opposed to Buonaparte, where, I am told, he exposed himself to many dangers."

"He had no more business to join the Austrians," said sir George Topley, "than

the knights you were talking of had to go to the Holy-Land."

"There is, surely, a difference between the cases," resumed Mr. Macdonald: "for though volunteering in the Austrian army is, perhaps, one of those things in which you would not like to imitate Mr. Mordaunt; yet, as he happened to be in Italy at a time when the French were carrying every thing before them, he might naturally think that, in joining our allies against them, he was serving his country: not but I am of opinion that he would have judged better in coming home, and engaging in the militia, or in some volunteer corps, as you, sir, no doubt, did."

"Indeed I did not," said sir George; because, in spite of all the vapouring of the French about invading England, I was convinced they would never attempt it, and fully persuaded of their being all sunk or taken by our fleets if they did."

"What might have had some effect also,

my dear sir George, in preventing your adopting the measures the gentleman mentions," added lady Blunt, " was your being very deeply engaged in several horse-races in different and distant parts of the country."

With the same good-natured intention that had before induced him to interpose, Mr. Clement said—" From all I have heard of Mr. Mordaunt, he is, certainly, a very gallant man; but, perhaps, like the *preux chevaliers* that have been mentioned, he is sometimes fond of danger for danger's sake."

" I humbly beg your pardon for differing from a gentleman of your cloth," resumed Mr. Macdonald.—" I must say I take Mr. Mordaunt to have too much good sense to love danger merely for danger's sake. But I can conceive, that when a great degree of intrepidity is united to an ardent desire of distinction, that a man may be fond of presenting himself to hazardous situations, which he

might, without dishonour, have avoided ; and this forms the difference between an officer who barely does his duty, that he may avoid reproach, and another who is actuated by zeal for the service, and an ardent passion for honest and well-merited fame. Mr. Mordaunt having gone a volunteer into the Austrian service, on motives which would have weighed with few, thought it would be unbecoming the character of an Englishman to keep aloof from danger, and therefore offered himself, on a variety of perilous occasions, in consequence of which he drew the admiration of the army, and obtained the praises of the general. But, previous to this, he was advantageously known to many Austrian officers of distinction, by a very singular adventure he had at Vienna with an Italian lady, who followed him from Rome to that capital."

Lady Blunt expressed a desire to know all the circumstances of this adventure ; but Mr.

Macdonald said, "that he had heard it mentioned only in general terms by colonel Sommers, who had declared that his friend had displayed great intrepidity and presence of mind on the occasion, without communicating the particulars."

"Perhaps," said lady Blunt, "Mrs. Demure can favour us with the particulars?"

"I do not conceive," replied that lady, with a look of resentment, "how your ladyship comes to imagine that I should be acquainted with the gentleman's adventures."

"I merely thought it possible, my dear madam," said lady Blunt; "and had not the least idea that my supposition could have offended you."

"Offended me!" replied Mrs. Demure, forcing a smile:—"your ladyship never was more mistaken in your life, if you imagine that the supposition *offends* me—though

I must acknowledge it *surprises* me a good deal."

"There are people," rejoined lady Blunt, "who are very much offended when they are surprised."

Mrs. Courtney joined us at that instant, and pressed lady Blunt to a card-party, which put an end to the altercation. But I have some curiosity to know the circumstances of the adventure to which Mr. Macdonald alluded—Your husband undoubtedly knows the whole. He must be a singular kind of man, this friend of the colonel.—Pray, my dear, invite your husband to tell you the particulars; and at your convenience transmit them to me—the sooner the better. What a long and circumstantial epistle this is!—I hope your next will be in the same style.

Lady Diana informs me that poor Mrs. Denham is still in too feeble a state of health to be left. Her eldest son has obtained a commission in the army through her influ-

ence. The young man is to join his regiment directly. The marchioness has set out for Bath.

Farewell !

H. CLIFFORD.

I hope the Vienna adventure will be the subject of your next.

LETTER LVI.

Mrs. SOMMERS to Miss HORATIA CLIFFORD.

MY DEAR HORATIA.

Ashwood.

WHEN I received your last letter, my husband was going to a county-meeting, and not to return till the following day. I spoke to him on the subject you desired. He immediately took from his bureau a paper, which he said was a narrative of that affair. I had previously been informed that he was at Rome when Mr. Mordaunt first formed an acquaintance with the Italian lady in question. That gentleman was then only about twenty years of age. His graceful appearance and address produced the same effect in Italy that they had previously done in France and Germany. He was very much distinguished by the ladies. This one in particular used all her art, and she was mistress of a great deal, to captivate him. She suc-

ceeded in such a degree as to alarm all his friends, particularly my husband, who was his greatest intimate. She was graced with a title, was of a majestic person, and beautiful. I have heard, however, that, on certain occasions, something a little too masculine appeared in the expressive features of her countenance. She possessed many accomplishments, and all the powers of seduction. Though she affected to be passionately enamoured of Mr. Mordaunt, yet she maintained a reserve of behaviour with him, which it was pretty generally believed she had not always preserved with other men. She was involved in debt, was five years older than Mr. Mordaunt. Her aim was to entice him into marriage. She would have gained her point, had not my husband, who is also older by two years than his friend, at the risk of mortally offending him, prevented. He succeeded in opening Mr. Mordaunt's eyes with regard to the character of the woman, and in convincing him of the folly of marrying a woman

who had nothing but beauty, and a few showy accomplishments, to recommend her. But, even after my husband was convinced of all this, he still dreaded the lady's powers in case of an interview. He prevailed on his friend to leave Rome without informing her of his intention. The two friends passed with rapidity to Venice ; from whence, after a short stay, they proceeded to Vienna, where they intended to spend the summer.

But my husband at that time having only the rank of captain in the army, and hearing that there were some new levies to be made, and a chance of actual service, returned suddenly to England, leaving Mr. Mordaunt at Vienna.

This much of the story, my dear Horatia, I knew before ; the written narrative delivered to me by my husband begins at this period.

On giving it to me, he said, "Having heard indistinctly of this affair, I wrote to Mordaunt for the particulars ; but whether it proceeded from a dislike to what so many people are

fond of, namely, being the hero of his own tale, or from a natural impatience of temper, which hurried him into new scenes where he expected new enjoyment, and deprived him of both leisure and inclination to writing, I never received any thing but a few general expressions in his letters to me on the subject. The narrative I now give you," my husband continued, "was sent to me by a friend of Mordaunt's and mine, who remained with him at Vienna after I left it, and had been informed of all the particulars. This adventure, with some others he has since met with, have given my friend an unlucky prejudice against marriage. Had he been as fortunate as I have been in female acquaintance," added the colonel, "he would at this moment be convinced that matrimony is the happiest of all states."

There, my dear Horatia, is a gallant husband for you ! As soon as he left me I began to copy the narrative, as follows :

[As the Comteffina was persuaded that captain Sommers had always opposed her views on his friend, and that it was through his influence that Mr. Mordaunt had quitted Rome so abruptly, she no sooner heard of the captain's having returned to England, than she determined on a journey to Vienna, in the view of regaining the hold she formerly had on the affections of Mr. Mordaunt. To this she combined a plan of intimidation, in case the other should fail in accomplishing her end.

With these views she made the journey from Rome to Vienna, accompanied by a tall, fierce-looking, Neapolitan officer, whom she called her brother.

Mr. Mordaunt was more surprised than displeased when he heard of her arrival.

Though he was fully convinced that her ostentatious tenderness was all art and dissimulation, and, of course, he was in a great measure cured of the affection and enthusiastic admiration he had at one time enter-

tained, she still interested him to a considerable degree.

When they met, after complaining, with a pathetic accent, of his abrupt departure from Rome, she said, "that a few days after he disappeared her brother had arrived from Sicily: his scheme being to proceed to Germany, on purpose to improve in his profession by viewing the discipline of the German armies, he had persuaded her to accompany him as far as Vienna, where she intended to remain while he should visit the Austrian and Prussian garrisons; and, on his return to Vienna, her brother and she proposed to go back to Rome together."

The brother thanked Mr. Mordaunt, in the politest terms, for the attentions which, he understood, he had paid to his sister at Rome; expressed a high admiration of the English nation, and great satisfaction in the thought of his sister having so accomplished a cavalier to accompany her to the public places while she remained at Vienna."

Mr. Mordaunt was not without suspicion that there was some secret design under all this ; but, as he found pleasure in the lady's company, and was sufficiently determined against her principal object, he continued to visit them.

The lady appeared as alluring, and rather more complying than ever. One evening, which Mr. Mordaunt passed with the brother and sister, she let fall, as if accidentally, that her brother was to assist at a review of some regiments of Hungarian cavalry that was to take place the following morning. " Very true," said the brother : " and I hope you will accompany me," added he, addressing Mordaunt ; " but it will be rather too early for my sister."

Mr. Mordaunt was just going to agree to the proposal, when he felt his foot gently pressed by that of the lady. So strong a hint could not be misunderstood : he said, " that he recollected a business which would

put it out of his power to be at the review."

The next day he visited the lady.—They were surprised by the brother, and another ferocious-looking fellow in an officer's uniform.

The lady shrieked, and then exhibited a fainting-fit pretty naturally.

The stranger in the uniform said, with seeming emotion—"Alas! signor, your sister is dead."

The Neapolitan's countenance, which before expressed rage, now assumed the appearance of despair. Mordaunt, collecting his presence of mind, was attentive to all their movements.

The lady, slowly opening her eyes, looked around with an air of amazement, as if she had forgot what had passed.—"Where am I?" exclaimed she, in a solemn tragic voice. "Good heavens! my dearest brother, is it you!" continued she, with an affected look of wildness.

This being over-acted, convinced Mr. Mordaunt of what he had suspected from the beginning.

“ Yes, wretched woman ! it is your brother,” exclaimed the Neapolitan ; “ in what a situation have I found you ! Have you disgraced your noble family ? have you sullied the purity of your illustrious blood ? ” Then, observing a smile on Mr. Mordaunt’s countenance, he added, with a furious look, “ What ! does your undoer smile at the ruin he has produced ! ”

Mordaunt burst into laughter.

This kindled the Neapolitan’s rage more fiercely. After a flourish of oaths, he expatiated on the crime of seducing a woman.

Mr. Mordaunt coolly said—“ Seduction is certainly a crime, whether the seduced be man or woman.”

The Neapolitan, raising his voice, declared—“ that his sister’s honour could not be repaired otherwise than by marriage.”

Mordaunt replied—“ that he had no ob-

jection to her repairing it that way, or any other, that would answer the end."

"It is well, signor," said the Neapolitan, in a gentle tone, being deceived by what Mordaunt had said. "I could not doubt of your acting like a man of honour."

"You shall have less reason to doubt it now than ever," resumed Mordaunt. "You shall find that I am neither to be deceived by an infamous conspiracy, nor bullied by a couple of bravos."

The Neapolitan looked at his companion, who seemed confounded at the resolute behaviour and words of Mordaunt.

Perceiving the Neapolitan to put his hand to the hilt of his sword, Mordaunt, who, at the first alarm, had sprung from the couch and seized his own sword, which he held undrawn in his hand, addressed the two men in these words:—"If you intend assassination, you may perhaps succeed; but not before I shall have had the satisfaction of killing

the first of you who makes the attempt; and I am convinced that my friends have interest enough to get the other broken on the wheel."

Having said this, he moved to the door, and withdrew, without interruption, from the Italians, who were overawed and confounded to such a degree, that they remained silent and motionless for some minutes after he had left the room. The woman was the first that recovered the use of her tongue, which she employed, until she was out of breath, in vain execrations, and in abuse of her two companions, as poltroons, particularly the stranger in the uniform. This man was a Dalmatian, whom they had picked up at Venice, and whom they dropped at the same city on their return to Rome.

I afterwards met this very Dalmatian at Venice; and, without much difficulty, prevailed on him to tell me all he knew of the story; without which, I should not have

been acquainted with some of the particulars above enumerated.]

After copying this long paper, you will not expect that I should add much from myself: I cannot help, however, expressing a wish, my dear, that you may follow the counsel I gave at the end of my last.—Adieu! my dearest Horatia: believe me ever yours,

JULIET SOMMERS.

LETTER LVII.

The Countess of DEANPORT to JAMES

GRINDILL, *Esq.*

London.

I AM more provoked at this girl Clifford than ever. She behaved in the most insolent manner possible at an assembly, since the last time I wrote. I sat by miss Moyston and her aunt :—my son entered,—I endeavoured to catch his eye, and draw him to them ; but the moment he saw miss Clifford, regardless of my beckoning, he made up to her. As I had reason to think she was not very much pleased with me at that time, I had some hopes that, from spite against me, she would have behaved coldly at least to him ; but, on the contrary, she received his assiduities with the most flattering complacency : she seemed to attend to none of the young fellows who surrounded her but him. She certainly perceived me make signs

to him to approach us. As often as he seemed ready to comply, she addressed herself with such smiling earnestness to him that he could not quit her. She evidently enjoyed the grimaces of the aunt, the mortified looks of miss Moylton, and the rage which, I fear, was but too apparent in my countenance. You cannot conceive with what a triumphant air she past us, as he led her to her carriage. If I ever forgive her the look she threw on me, I hope she will immediately after marry my son, and govern him as she pleases for life.

It is clear that she has consulted her oracle; and the entire change of her conduct towards Deanport is in consequence of the response of the Great Diana. From the hatred which I bear to that goddess I cannot doubt of hers to me; for it is not likely that an old maid should have more good nature than other women. I consider the Vestal, therefore, as the first mover of the late insult, and shall act accordingly.

It is in vain to attempt to turn my son from his present pursuit, especially as long as the object of it encourages the chase; but it is not impossible to give it a termination very different from what the damsel herself, or her chaste instructress, dreams of. In the mean time, I shall endeavour to cajole the Moystons, and keep them in as good humour as I can.

The very day after Miss Clifford had enjoyed her triumph, though my breast was still glowing with resentment, I met Deanport at breakfast with a gay countenance.

I wished to put him in good humour, which, by the way, is no easy task, particularly at breakfast. I don't know whether you have observed it; but people who are naturally ill-humoured show it more at breakfast than at any other time. Besides, he knew I had some reason to be displeased with *him*; of course he looked rather sulky at *me*. I took no notice of that, and proceeded to converse in the most easy and cheerful style on indifferent subjects. When I saw that the gloom

on his countenance was dispersed,—“Apropos!” said I, “you go on triumphantly in your affair with that girl.”

He stared, and asked, “What girl?”

“Why, *the Clifford*,” answered I. “Every body remarks that you have already turned her head, and may do with her what you please.”

“Lord!” said he, his eyes sparkling with vanity, “what idle conjectures people make! Miss Clifford behaves to me only with common politeness.”

“Nay, Deanport,” said I, “I have no design to penetrate into what you, as a man of honour, ought to keep secret; nor do I wish to be your confidant in such affairs. I have no particular affection, it is true, for the girl, yet I am sorry to see attentions paid to her which lead to *her* ruin; though, according to the unjust notions of the world of gallantry, they may add to *your* reputation. I wish you no fresh laurels at such expense.”

“I do not believe,” said he, “that any thing of that nature is suspected.”

"What else, my dear Deanport," said I, "can be suspected? Nobody thinks so meanly of you as to suspect you have any serious views on such a girl; and you are blamed for persevering in your attentions to her, because it may prevent some man, more suitable to her rank, from paying his addresses to her. You are accused of acting the part of the boys in the fable of the frogs: what was sport to the former was death to the latter. The more reason there is, therefore, from the levity of this girl's character, and your reputation as a man of gallantry, to imagine that you may carry your point with her, I am the more solicitous that you should give up the pursuit. You may depend upon it, my dear Deanport, that such an instance of self-denial would afford you more solid and permanent comfort than your success can possibly do. But, if these reflections should fail in deciding you entirely to abandon your designs on this girl, I hope a proper regard for your own interest will induce you to suspend them at least.

Your attentions to miss Clifford alarm miss Moyston ; and, if continued, may provoke her to that degree, that she may throw herself into the arms of lord Sordid, or some other ; for, depend upon it, she may choose a husband from the whole unmarried peers of the realm. It will afford you endless remorse, should a transient phantasy, which will be over in a few months, preclude you from the means of gratifying every wish of your heart during your whole life."

It was evident, from the attention he paid to this harangue, that some part made a strong impression. He hinted, "that I was in an error with respect to miss Clifford ; that, notwithstanding her natural vivacity, he knew no woman whose conversation and manner gave less encouragement to any attempt of the nature I had alluded to."

With a smile, expressive of compassion and contempt, I said "I was extremely happy that he was of that way of thinking, because

it would prevent him from making any such attempt, and of course from ever feeling the remorse which would ultimately attend his being undeceived."—To this he made no answer, and we separated.

If he was ever so silly as to have matrimony in his head, I am pretty certain that I have shaken his purpose. He will now, at least, make an essay to carry his point on easier terms. I confess I have no very sanguine hopes of his success. The girl seems to have firmness as well as pride, and a comfortable degree of respect for herself: all these are against my son. If she had less sense and spirit, I should have better hopes; however, there is no knowing what may happen: any woman may be caught napping. But if, from her own pride, and the admonitions of the chaste Diana, she should be on her guard, in that case, depend upon it, the young lady will give herself high airs of indignation: her purity, no doubt, will be

wonderfully offended ; and she may chance to say or do something that will wound his lordship's vanity : and I should not be surpris'd, if, in his wrath against miss Clifford, he made proposals of marriage to miss Moyston.—You smile at the folly of a man proposing marriage to a woman about whom he is indifferent, on purpose to vex the woman he loves. Absurd as it seems, I have known more than one of the wise lords of the creation commit this very folly. And as my son's conduct is as often regulated by caprice as that of any of his brethren, why should I think him secure from the same folly ?

But, should it happen otherwise in the present instance, should he bear the rebuff with patience, still it will occasion a temporary breach, that will require time, and the art of the chaste Diana, to repair.

But do you know, that, after having put this attempt into his head, I am by no means clear that I ought to wish him success (and,

to my knowledge, he has been successful with women higher born than this Clifford)? For, though it would gratify my hatred against her present directress, as well as that I feel against the insolent gipsy herself, to see her my son's mistress, she might even then retain too great ascendancy over him. In short, I am not absolutely certain that she might not persuade him, after all, to make her his wife.—What say you?

I heartily wish that this cousin of yours would conclude the business one way or the other. I sympathise with you very sincerely. I know what horrible constraint it is to attend a dying relation, from whom one has expectations, during a tedious illness;—to be obliged to wear the most melancholy aspect, to speak in a sympathising accent, to raise his head, to smooth his pillow—Ah! how disgusting! I went through the whole nauseous process in the very flower of my youth, in the last illness of my grandfather;

and, after all, the ungrateful dotard left his whole fortune to my brother, who never handed him a cup of water-gruel!

Farewell!

E. DEANPORT.

P. S. I had almost forgot to inform you, that your old acquaintance, Mr. Townly, is a good deal with my son at present. Townly has long lived a painful life, to maintain the reputation of a man of pleasure; and though now unfit for the practice, he is thought to be profoundly skilled in the theory of gallantry. As my son has been accustomed, from his childhood, to consider him in that view, and at the top of fashion, what he suggests would have great weight with his lordship. I do not choose to commit myself so far as to give any hint to Townly, but you may.

Send me your notions, at large, on all I have written.

On reflection, I have resolved on a complete alteration in my behaviour to miss Clifford. I intend to make up to her with every appearance of esteem ; as much, if I am able to assume it, as I feel of real resentment.— Do not you think this proper ? It will facilitate the views of my son, put the nymph off her guard, and dispose her to receive his advances with more indulgence.

LETTER LVIII.

Mrs. DARNLEY to Lady DIANA FRANKLIN.

London.

I CANNOT deny myself the pleasure of informing your ladyship that young lord Deanport has of late shown so much attention to my niece Horatia, that I am convinced he means to make her a proposal of marriage.

Independent of his rank and fortune, he is handsome, extremely polite, and was pretty generally allowed to have danced the second best minuet at the last birth-day ball. He never speaks in parliament, not being of a talkative disposition : besides, I am told that all speaking there is considered now as superfluous. His lordship has no great taste for politics—partly, I believe, because it has of late been the prevailing taste of the vulgar.

There is a report that he is speedily to be appointed to an important office; but whether in the cabinet or household is not certain.

Your ladyship must be sensible of the many advantages of such a match to the dear girl in whose welfare I know you take so sincere an interest; but you will be surprised and concerned to hear, that, with all her understanding, she herself seems to be less moved by those advantages than her best friends could wish; though of late, indeed, she behaves with more respect to the young nobleman than she did at first: but in a private conversation I had with her last night, she betrayed so great a disregard of his endowments, and a blindness to the other advantages of such a connection, as distresses me extremely. Your ladyship knows that Horatia refused a man of still greater fortune than his lordship when she was abroad with her father. He was only a commoner, indeed, though rich enough to

have made three peers. But it was not on account of his not being a peer that she refused him. I have reason to believe it was merely because she thought rather meanly of his understanding; though, in other points, an exceeding respectable man.

As my dear brother never blamed his daughter for this, I shall not take on me to condemn her: but this I must say, that if several women of my acquaintance, who are very comfortably married, had possessed a particle of the same scruple, they would never have been united to their present husbands. So Horatia ought not to allow a prejudice of this nature to have too much weight.

As your ladyship has more influence with her than any body, I thought it right to acquaint you with what I conceive to be lord Deanport's intention, that you may prevent her from falling into an error similar to the former, if the former was an error; because it would be more inexcusable now, when she

is of a riper age, and ought to have acquired more wisdom.

I have not spoken on this subject to my husband, because I cannot say that lord Deanport has directly made a propofal of marriage to my niece; but I have a thousand reasons for believing that it is her fault, and not his. Those reasons I am not fond of stating circumstantially to my husband, because men in general do not fully comprehend such matters, and no man in particular less than Mr. Darnley, though, in most other things, he has a very clear judgment.

I am convinced, from your ladyship's acknowledged good sense, and from the friendship you have always shown my niece, that you will not delay to warn her against the folly and danger of keeping a person of lord Deanport's rank long in suspense, particularly as I have reason to believe that his mother wishes him to court the rich miss Moynton, who, in conjunction with her ladyship, is doing all in her power to engage his affec-

tions.—The countess, I know, is reckoned a proud and designing woman; and, notwithstanding her polite behaviour in your presence, I dare say you are not ignorant of her real sentiments respecting you. But, when Horatia is married, she will certainly have more influence with her husband than the countess can be supposed to have; and she will then, no doubt, be proud to live on a good footing with your ladyship.

I am extremely glad to hear that Mrs. Denham is better.—I beg you will present my best compliments to her.

I remain,

Your ladyship's
most obedient humble servant,

E. DARNLEY.

Do you not think that Horatia would be using your ladyship and her other friends very

ill, if she were to give lord Deanport, or any other man who may pay his addressees to her, a refusal, without informing them, and taking their advice. If that is your ladyship's opinion, I dare say you will think it right to express it in your letter to her.

As the person your mention has not hitherto made any proposal to our young friend, it would be improper for me to write or speak to her on the subject. Indeed, I should take no notice of it to her, though I were here after to be informed that he had actually made proposals unless she herself asked my opinion or advice. I know what I know of the character and disposition of your niece, I am persuaded that she will not give her hand to any man, without informing Mr. Darnley and you, and endeavouring to obtain your approbation. This, I think, ought to satisfy all her relations and friends; especially, as she really never has given any proof of caprice, or want of discernment, in her likings or dislikings. As the gentleman to whom

LETTER LIX.

Lady DIANA FRANKLIN to Miss DARNLEY.

MY DEAR MADAM,

As the person you mention has not hitherto made any proposal to our young friend, it would be improper for me to write or speak to her on the subject. Indeed, I should take no notice of it to her, though I were hereafter to be informed that he had actually made proposals, unless she herself asked my opinion or advice. From what I know of the character and disposition of your niece, I am persuaded that she will not give her hand to any man, without informing Mr. Darnley and you, and endeavouring to obtain your approbation. This, I think, ought to satisfy all her relations and friends; especially, as she really never has given any proof of caprice, or want of discernment, in her likings or dislikings. As for the gentleman to whom

you allude, whom she refused to marry when she was only seventeen, the debasing tastes which he has since displayed, and the wretched figure he makes in life, should prevent either herself or her friends from regretting her rejection of him. Assuredly, my dear madam, you have not been informed of his present style of life : and you have too much penetration not to have observed that the most affluent fortune would be no compensation to a woman of Horatia's turn of mind, for having a ridiculous, an ignorant, or even a well-meaning weak man, to her husband. She never will marry, I am fully persuaded, until she is asked by a man whom she highly esteems, independent of his fortune, his rank, and his disposition. She must have a man of understanding for her husband.

You hint that I have reason to complain of lady Deanport's sentiment of me. While she refrains from injurious actions I shall remain indifferent about her sentiments.

If ever Horatia should consult me on the

the subject of your letter, you may rest satisfied that my advice shall be given without any consideration of that lady's prejudice against me.

Mrs. Denham is better, but not so well as to allow me to think of leaving her. She has supported a severe and tedious illness with resignation and fortitude; and has given proofs of a most amiable,—and, what is more, of a Christian, disposition. She will have reason to say, “it is good for me that I have been afflicted.”

I remain, my dear madam, with respectful compliments to Mr. Darnley,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

DIANA FRANKLIN.

In answer to the question in your postscript, I think no young woman ought to give her consent to a proposal of marriage without consulting her friends. But, if she is deter-

mined to refuse the proposal, she acts with delicacy to the man in concealing it; because no man likes to have it known that he has been rejected. She also acts with delicacy to her own relations; because, though they should think her objections frivolous, she might feel them to be insurmountable.

LETTER LX.

JAMES GRINDILL, *Esq. to the* COUNTESS of
DEANPORT.

South Wales.

I ENTER warmly into your ladyship's resentment against miss Clifford.

Your having appeared in good humour the morning after the scene at the assembly was necessary for retaining your influence with lord Deanport, and for giving weight to the inuendos you threw out. Had you seemed displeased, or permitted any upbraiding expression to fall from you, on account of his attachment to miss Clifford, the effect would have been to have made him pay his court to her more assiduously than ever. Your ladyship must have observed that nothing is so apt to make some people adhere to whatever whim they take into their head than opposing it. Argument, however strong,

instead of convincing, irritates: and, even when convinced that the measure they are inclined to is pernicious, the pleasure of crossing the disapprovers, though they may be their best friends, overcomes, in the minds of people of this character, every consideration of decorum, or even of interest. But why do I mention this to your ladyship, who understands character so well; and who, I am sure, will never be so much off your guard as, from heat or want of temper, to provoke a person it is so much your interest to manage? The motive to which you imputed all his attentions, and the hints that they would be successful, flattered his vanity without showing disapprobation of his taste, and will, probably, stimulate him to what he might not otherwise have had hardihood sufficient to undertake. Notwithstanding the cautions in my last against any rough attack on the lady's character, the ingenious manner in which you conducted it, I imagine, will answer one or the other of the

purposes you proposed. I also approve of your abstaining, on that occasion, from all praises of the lady's wit or understanding, because they might have given him a suspicion of your having a personal malignity against the girl, and of having some private view in making her peculiarly odious to him. Panegyrics of that insidious nature may be found expedient on some future occasion however; and, I am convinced, will not fail of the intended effect. The discernment with which you have perceived, and the sagacity with which you intend to repair the small mistake you committed in showing resentment against miss Clifford, is most admirable. I have not the least doubt that your former behaviour has piqued the damsel, and that she has given herself the airs you mention, merely to vex you, and in revenge for your preferring miss Moyston. Whether the late change in miss Clifford's behaviour to your son proceeds from her being more struck than formerly with his lordship's appearance, or from

resentment or caprice, it is laudable in your ladyship to render the circumstance subservient to your own views, which are those of a prudent mother, anxious for the permanent happiness of her son.

Miss Moyston and miss Clifford are as different in character as in appearance; yet the difference in one material part of their character, very probably, has depended, in a great measure, on the difference in their appearance. A large proportion of prudes are to be found among women decidedly ugly; whereas, in general, the handsome, or, which forms a greater number, those who think themselves so, have a tendency to coquetry. We might expect it would be so, even though we had not observed that the truth of the remark is confirmed by experience. The consciousness of beauty naturally inspires gaiety, and a desire of exciting admiration by a display of personal charms. The consciousness of a total want of personal charms is apt to inspire discontent, envy, and censorious-

ness. From this may have sprung that moroseness and prudery which is remarked in miss Moyston; as well as the gaiety, versatility, and occasional coquetry, of miss Clifford's behaviour. But, though different in those respects, each of those ladies is possessed of attractions for a young nobleman like lord Deanport. What alone is desirable in the one, unquestionably, is her fortune, which cannot be obtained otherwise than by marriage; but what attracts him in the other may be enjoyed without that degrading ceremony. I wish him success in both. But if he is to fail in one of his objects, it had better be in that to which he is prompted by a transient inclination, than in the other, which is founded in a passion for money; a passion of which his lordship has already given indications, and which generally strengthens with age.

Your ladyship, with admirable penetration into the secret sources of human conduct, expresses a fear that the pride you ob-

serve in miss Clifford's character will prove a defence against his lordship's attempts ; but what I imagine will contribute to the same effect, is that species of pride which belongs to his own character, which is too visible in his manner, and hurts the self-love of others. There is a certain loftiness in his address, even to women, which gives the impression that he is prepossessed with the notion that his notice does them honour. There is reason to dread that this will be a bar to his success with miss Clifford, who, with less stateliness, has the presumption, I suspect, of being as proud as his lordship. It may, however, have the effect which your ladyship also foresees, of making her repulse him with an arrogance which will convert his love into hatred. There is no knowing how it may affect her. No experience of your charming sex, my dear lady Deanport, can enable one to decide how any individual woman will act, on particular emergencies ; as no experience of ours can make it certain how any indi-

vidual man, who is under the influence of love, will be affected by the scorn or caprice of the woman he loves.

Your ladyship justly remarks, that any woman may be caught napping; but it is also true, that some women have a greater disposition to be drowsy than others: and those who are endowed with that pride, which you suspect to belong to the character of miss Clifford, are the most wakeful.

I own I do not much dread a danger, which you seem to apprehend might be the consequence of his victory; namely, that, after being his mistress, she might persuade him to make her his wife, and retain an ascendancy over him that would annihilate all your ladyship's influence. I beg leave to remind you of what you have often complained, in your son's disposition, that, though eager to obtain whatever strikes his fancy, and miserable if he misses it, yet, when obtained, and in his possession, it directly begins to lose its charms, and soon becomes in-

spid. You may rest assured that this versatility is never more sudden than in the connection of men of that disposition with women. Favours are said to be the food of love; yet, in my opinion, it often dies of that aliment. But I imagine that, on this occasion, your ladyship confounds the conduct of such men in their youth with what is often their fate in the decline of life. If at that period they chance to be bachelors, they are apt to be the slaves of mercenary mistresses, who rule them with a rod of iron. In youth they are ever in search of variety; in age they are governed by habit.—I confess, that if lord Deanport was verging towards old age, or if his constitution was so broken by excesses, that he had anticipated its imbecillities, I should have the same apprehensions with your ladyship, and think it probable that any woman who could accommodate herself to his caprices, and bear occasional fits of ill-usage, would have the management of him, and finally prevail on him to marry her: but from a woman of miss Clifford's character

nothing of that kind is to be dreaded, either in his present state of health, or in that above supposed; because, in the first case, she would soon lose all hold of him from his natural fickleness, and, in the second, she would not bear to live with him, even were he to offer her marriage.

You will observe, that my best hopes are founded on this damsel's giving herself such airs as will wound his lordship's vanity, and occasion, at least, a temporary breach between them, which your ladyship may then render irreparable.

I have the pleasure to inform you, that appearances in this quarter of the world are more favourable than ever; and I am in full hope that this tedious business is very near a conclusion: after which, you may depend on my abridging all ceremonies here, that I may have the happiness of waiting on your ladyship as soon as possible.

I remain,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

J. GRINDILL,

P. S. I shall write to Townly by this very post, in the style your ladyship wishes:— it may be of service. He is wonderfully flattered by being thought an adept in the science of gallantry. He will boast to my lord of his own successes; and perhaps stimulate him to an attempt, which, whatever way it ends, must be favourable to your views.

LETTER LXI.

JAMES GRINDILL, *Esq.* to ROBERT TOWNLY, *Esq.*

You, my dear Townly, have, through life, sacrificed what is called business, and every other object, to the pursuit of pleasure; and no man alive is supposed to have been more successful in the chace.—However ambitious I may have been to imitate you, I am, at present, as you may have learned from lord Deanport, reduced to the necessity of sacrificing the pleasure of being with those I love in town to the painful occupation of attending a dying relation in Wales.

It is to be hoped that my penance draws near a close. In the mean time, I am going to write to you confidentially on a subject, in which, from your friendship to the earl of Deanport, I am persuaded, you will feel yourself as much interested as I am.

The relations of that young nobleman, as I am informed, are extremely uneasy on account of his attachment to a miss Clifford of Northumberland. How, indeed, can they be otherwise, considering the number of young men of rank and fortune who have thrown themselves away of late on girls who have neither; in some instances, not even beauty; or, at least, not more than may be purchased for a few guineas. The girl, I understand, is artful, and is using every means in her power to draw his lordship into a marriage:—nothing can be more equitable, therefore, than to make her the dupe of her own artifices. And who is so able to instruct him how to elude the snares laid for him, or to entrap the ensnarer, as yourself? Who can boast more knowledge of the world? Who has applied his talents more successfully to that half of it which it is most pleasant to study, and most difficult to understand? Though I could not help partaking of the uneasiness which the young lord's relations feel on the present occasion, yet, on my

part, it has been a good deal alleviated, since I was informed that you were so much with his lordship of late. I have no doubt of your having sufficient influence to prevail on him either to renounce his present pursuit altogether, or to attempt bringing it to an issue on easier terms than those designing persons who have drawn him into it expect.

I hope soon to hear of the good effects of your sage advice; and remain,

My dear sir,

Your sincere friend and servant,

J. GRINDILL.

LETTER LXII.

Miss HORATIA CLIFFORD to Mrs. SOMMERS.

London!

I HAVE many thanks to return you, my dearest Juliet, for the trouble you took in gratifying my idle curiosity to know the particulars of Mr. Mordaunt's adventure. Whatever regards so intimate a friend of your husband must interest me in some degree: but if I had foreseen that my request would have subjected you to the task of copying so long a narrative, I, perhaps, should not have made it, though the circumstances are in themselves interesting. What a shocking creature, with all her beauty, must that Italian woman be! What an horrid idea, to endeavour to terrify a man into marriage! But it appears that Mr. Mordaunt is not a man to be terrified.—Don't you think there is something very striking in that gentleman's character?

With regard to Mrs. Demure, similar reflections with those you suggest, on what she said of lady Deanport, occurred to myself; and therefore I would have laid little stress on her testimony if it had not been confirmed by that of others, of whose candour I had a better opinion.

I strongly suspect that she is fond of detraction, and that there is little reality in the sensibility which she is so fond of professing.

I believe I formerly informed you, that I had remarked that she was apt to betray ill humour as often as Mr. Mordaunt's name was mentioned.—I don't know what tempted me, this very morning, to ask her if she was much acquainted with that gentleman. She replied, with peculiar acrimony of voice and countenance, "that she would be sorry to be much acquainted with such a profligate."

Though I had some inclination to know on what her opinion was founded, I was discouraged by her manner of receiving the first from putting another question. Besides, I

was convinced that, if the gentleman deserved the character she gave him, he would not have been the chosen friend of colonel Sommers.

My aunt, however, is delighted with the refined and noble sentiments of which Mrs. Demure makes a frequent display—though she could not help being somewhat shocked at what occurred yesterday. Mrs. Demure happening to call as my aunt and I were stepping into the coach to go to Kensington-gardens, she went with us. After walking for some time, we went into one of those covered seats, or boxes, near the palace. My aunt spoke with high esteem of a nobleman lately deceased. She enumerated many of his good qualities.—

“What I admired above all, in your friend,” said Mrs. Demure, with a very theatrical air, “was, that

“He had a tear for pity, and a hand
Open as day for melting charity.”

She had no sooner pronounced this, than a pale emaciated man, who had, perhaps, heard her, presented himself at the open side of the box, and implored her charity.

What made her lose her temper I cannot imagine; for nothing in the poor man's appearance and manner was calculated to excite any sentiment but that of compassion. Mrs. Demure, however, turned on him with anger, called him an idle intruding vagabond, and added, "that she thanked God she knew how to bestow her money better than on lazy fellows like him!"—The man bowed with a look of resignation, and, without making any other reply, withdrew.

Mrs. Demure then resumed her eulogium on the deceased nobleman, which she concluded by saying, with a plaintive tone of voice, "she was much afraid that few men alive could be compared to him for genuine benevolence of heart."

My aunt stepped for a minute out of the

box.—I afterwards discovered that it was to send her footman with a guinea to the poor man.

I wished to have had some discourse this morning with my aunt on Mrs. Demure's conduct on that occasion: she only said "she was persuaded that her friend had mistaken the poor man's character," and then changed the subject, which is her constant practice, when she has nothing advantageous to say of the person spoken of.

I wish, however, my aunt may not be more mistaken in Mrs. Demure's character than that lady was in the man's.—What could be a surer indication of character than what I have just related.—At the very instant, when she seemed enraptured with sentiments of benevolence, an occasion presents itself for putting them in practice: she not only shrinks from it, but is enraged at the miserable object who furnished her with the opportunity she appeared to be so desirous of.

For the sake of some people of my acquaintance, I should be sorry to think that all whom I have observed to be fond of expressing heroic and disinterested sentiments are deficient in the practice of benevolence; but I acknowledge that I am a little suspicious of those who are profuse of such declarations.

The fears you express in your last, lest my openly braving the countess of Deanport should expose me to her vengeance, are worthy of your friendship, and of a piece with that forgiving mildness of disposition which I have long admired in you, my sweet friend, without always being able to imitate it. In the present instance, however, I have followed your counsel.—I have—No; let me not try to deceive you in the most trifling particular—let me not hang out false colours to my friend—let her regard me just as I am. If I thought any part of your affection was derived from your believing me to be possessed of qualities I have not, it would abate in

some degree the pleasure I have in reflecting on your friendship. I should say, It is not me that Juliet loves and esteems, it is a better woman. In asserting a truth, I was on the point of leading you to believe a falsehood : it is true that I have done exactly what you advised ; but it was not in compliance with your advice, as I was leading you to believe, for I had begun to do so for other reasons, before I received your letter.

I accompanied my aunt, a few nights since, to the ambassadrefs's. Lady Deanport was there. You will naturally believe, that all I wished was, that she might take no notice of me. You cannot conceive my surprise, when, after addressing Mrs. Darnley in the usual terms of politeness, she spoke to me in the most obliging manner. I answered her at first a little drily ; but she continued with such an easy air, and in so affable a style, that it was impossible for me to preserve the coldness I had assumed. You know, my dear, that, however strong my resentment may be,

it never could resist the first symptoms of repentance in the person who had raised it. The countess spoke in so conciliating a tone, that I really thought she was sensible she had behaved to me improperly, and was solicitous that I should forget it. She inquired when I had heard from my friend lady Diana. This was near rekindling my resentment. It brought what Mrs. Demure had told me back to my recollection; but, before I had time to give any answer, she added so many obliging expressions concerning lady Diana, that I began to think Mrs. Demure's representations must have been founded on mistake: my coldness dissolved, and I met her ladyship's advances, not only with a conciliating countenance, but with real good-will. My lord joined us while we were conversing in this cordial manner. He seemed delighted to find his mother and me on such terms. My behaviour to him was more frank than it had ever been; more so even than his to me; for when he attempts to be frank he has the

air of condescending : besides, it is difficult to keep up a conversation with him, because what one is to say depends upon what was last said ; but he is exceedingly apt to give a fimper for an answer ; and then, if one has not the talent of lady Voluble, whose discourse admits no commas, colons, nor stops of any kind, one must of course be a little at a loss ; for far am I from being able to interpret the meaning of all his fimpers or smiles, if you please, that I sometimes cannot decide whether the most expressive of them mean *yes* or *no*.

With regard to your advice, ' that I should give him an unequivocal answer,' you may depend upon it he shall have it ; but he must first put the question, which he has never yet done ; and which, now that my resentment against lady Deanport is dissipated, I sincerely hope he never intends to do.

I am better pleased to be on a good footing than a bad with lady Deanport ; and I feel some sense of obligation to her son for

the civilities he shows to me; but I do not wish to be connected with either by any other link than that of general acquaintance. What gives me uneasiness, and really mortifies me a good deal, is to perceive that my aunt Darnley is mightily elated by the attentions of this noble peer. My aunt, you know, is one of the most benevolent of women; she loves me with the affection of a mother; her partiality to me convinces her that I would make a good figure as a peeress; my partiality to myself, you may suppose, inclines me to the same opinion. She ardently wishes that I may marry a peer. Perhaps I wish the same, though not so ardently. She would prefer a duke, but would be for my accepting of an earl, if he should make the offer at present,—because delays are dangerous. Unfortunately, not so much as a baron has, as yet, had that complaisance; and the noble earl, on whom her hopes are now fixed, is not to my taste. In case he really has the intention, which I evidently see she supposes, I should dread some disagreeable

scene between my aunt and me on that account, were it not for my uncle, who, with equal benevolence, is of a different character, and, I am certain, would approve of my preferring a commoner, with a moderate fortune, to a peer with the most opulent, provided I esteemed the former most. I do not know that you are thoroughly acquainted with Mr. Darnley, my dear. He is a man that—But I am interrupted. In my next I shall give you a pretty distinct notion of what sort of a man my uncle is. Farewell!

H. CLIFFORD.

LETTER LXIII.

Miss HORATIA CLIFFORD to *Mrs.* SOMMERS.

London.

WHEN I was interrupted, I was going to tell you, my dear Juliet, that Mr. Darnley is a man whom few things I can much elate or depress—whose blood and judgment are well co-mingled: he has taken Fortune's buffets and rewards with equal thanks. He seems to have been formed by Nature for a Stoic philosopher. No consideration will make him deviate from what he thinks the line of integrity. In other matters he is yielding to the humours of others, particularly to those of my aunt.

At her solicitation, he lives eight months every year in town, and only four at his estate in Oxfordshire. He said nothing could be more reasonable ; because, though his li-

brary was in his country-house, yet he could have the use of any book he pleased while he was at London; whereas, his wife could not have assemblies, and operas, and plays, which were to her what books were to him, in the same perfection in the country as in London. He had, originally, a very good estate, which he has not diminished; nor ever had a wish to augment. He was forty years of age when he married my aunt, who was about ten years younger. He once told me—"That he had been, in some degree, attracted by her beauty, more by her cheerful and accommodating temper, and most of all by his friendship for my father and mother. I was more ambitious to be connected with them," added he, "than with any duke or duchess in England. I certainly love you for your own sake, my dear Horatia; but, I believe, in my conscience, still more for theirs. You will be a good woman indeed, my dear, if you should ever be thought equal to your mother."

Though he uttered this with fervour, his eyes were dry : that was not the case with mine.—“ I did not mean,” resumed he, “ to distress you, but to give you pleasure. Is it not an honour, and ought it not to afford you pleasure, to be the offspring of two of the worthiest people in England ? We see people proud of their birth and titles, even when those titles were obtained without merit ; but you, my dear, have a legitimate claim to the *pride of birth*. You must, however, always keep in your mind, that if the daughter of such a father and mother as you can boast has only an ordinary share of merit, she will be thought to have degenerated.”

I cannot describe how I was affected by this discourse of Mr. Darnley. In spite of the sadness which the recollection of the loss of my parents always occasions, to hear them praised was delightful,—it was *the joy of grief—pleasant like the shower of spring, when it softens the branches of the oak, and the young leaf lifts its green head**.

* Ossian.

I will conclude this rambling letter with an anecdote at once characteristic of both my uncle and aunt. She, you know, my dear, is of a very hospitable disposition; she loves to give frequent entertainments, and is peculiarly gratified by having people of rank at her table. But, though she annually exhausts the sum which he, with more regard to her taste than his own, most liberally allows for household expenses, yet she endeavours not to exceed it. A person who possessed a considerable annuity from my uncle died lately. My aunt, willing to add a little more splendour to their present establishment, before she would make the proposal, observed to my uncle, one day at breakfast, that this annuity made such an augmentation of their income, as would enable him, without inconvenience, to increase their expenses, unless he chose rather to lay it up.

“I have no intention to lay it up, my dear,” said he.

“ Indeed,” replied she, “ I should think it hardly worth while.”

“ I am glad you are of my opinion, my dear ; and shall now inform you, that I have destined one half of that annuity to the maintenance and education of the orphan children of our late curate in the country, and the other half to that distant relation of yours who was struck with the palsy ; unless,” continued he, “ you have thought of some more useful way of employing it.”

A very deep blush spread over my aunt’s countenance : she threw her eyes on the ground ; and, after a pause, she said—“ Indeed, my dear, I can think of no way of bestowing it that is half so good : I should now be extremely sorry to see it employed otherwise. But, alas ! few in the world have so much generous reflection and benevolence as you.”

“ That remark is by much too severe on the world, my dear,” said my uncle ;

" but, as we are of one mind respecting the disposal of the annuity, I shall go and give directions accordingly."

You see, my dear Juliet, that I endeavour to repay you, in quantity at least, for the narrative you sent me. I suppose you will soon have a visit from the hero of that tale. The marchioness's friends at Richmond will on no account part with her. I am convinced they will not be able to keep her an hour, however, after she hears of lady Diana's arrival in London.

Adieu ! my dearest Juliet.

H. CLIFFORD.

LETTER LXIV.

The Honourable JOHN MORDAUNT *to Colonel*
SOMMERS.

DEAR SOMMERS,

Winchester.

TRAVERS and I set out from London for Hampshire this morning. We were detained here by some business I had with a person whom I found waiting for me at the inn. Travers is gone to bed. As I do not find myself so disposed, I will recount a little incident that occurred on the road, and which has never been entirely out of my thoughts since. For aught I know it is that, and that only, which keeps off all disposition to sleep: my account of it will perhaps have a contrary effect on you.

We rode on horseback the two first posts; and, as the weather was fine, sometimes deviated, on purpose to have a more commanding view of the country.—The *real* view of

fine landscapes is as pleasing as most verbal descriptions of them are fatiguing.

As we returned to the road, after one of these short excursions, we observed a post-chaise, with a woman, something in the style of a lady's maid in it, before the door of a cottage. Just as we came up, a lady came out of the cottage, stepped into the chaise, the door of which her footman shut, mounted his horse, and desired the postillion to drive on.

I had two views of this lady's face—one as she went from the cottage-door to the chaise; the other after she was in it, when she put her head a moment from the window, looking at Travers and me.

In the course of my life I never beheld so charming a countenance. Nothing could equal the loveliness of her face, except the elegance and symmetry of her person. I never was so forcibly struck with the lightning of mere personal beauty: but it was not

merely personal, for, in the two short views I had, I could perceive that

“ Her eyes shot sense, distinct and clear
As any muse’s tongue could speak *.”

“ An Phœbi soror ? an Nympharum sanguinis una ?”

said Travers, as he followed the chaise with his eyes ; then, turning to a young fellow, in a sailor’s dress, who stood near the door of the cottage—“ I’ll give you a shilling, my lad,” said he, “ if you’ll tell me who the lady is who went last into the chaise ?”

“ I would give half a crown myself to know who she is,” answered the sailor.

“ I honour your generosity as well as your taste, my honest fellow,” cried Travers ; “ and you’ll oblige me by accepting this half-guinea, to drink the woman’s health you admire so much.”

“ Thank your honour,” replied the sailor. “ All the information I can give you concerning the lady who has just set sail is, that I am sure she is an English woman.”

* Prior.

"How can you be sure even of that?" said Travers.

"Because all your foreign women, were they ever so handsome, have something of an outlandish look, which this lady has not," replied the sailor.

"You have seen a great many foreign women, perhaps," resumed Travers.

"I have sailed round the world," answered he.

"You must, *then*, have had great opportunities. — And, pray, where did you see the handsomest?"

"Why, please your honour, taking them all in all," rejoined the sailor, "I do not know but the handsomest women I ever saw, that is to say, out of England, was during a voyage up the Mediterranean, where I chanced to get a glimpse of some Greek girls belonging to an old Turk."

"To an *old* Turk?" said Travers.

"Yes, very old, please your honour. One might have thought he had no more use for

so many girls than a dog has for a side-pocket, as the saying is. But the fight I had of them had like to have cost me very dear."

"Those Greek girls came nearest in beauty to the lady who is just gone, you think?" said Travers.

"No, please your honour—Nell Smith, of Liverpool, comes nearest in the article of face, which is all I can speak to in respect of Nell."

"You think, then, that Nell Smith herself is not quite so handsome as that lady?"

"I cannot in conscience say she is," replied the sailor; "though, for my own part, I would prefer Nell, for old acquaintance sake."

"There is encouragement to matrimony," exclaimed Travers, addressing me.

"Let us step into the cottage," said I, dismounting.

Travers did the same; and having desired the sailor to deliver his compliments to Nell Smith, he followed me.

We found a woman suckling an infant, and two girls, one about eight years old, and the other about three, coarsely but neatly dressed.

On inquiring of the woman who the lady was, she answered, with fervour, "The lady is an angel!"

"This much I knew before. But I wish to know her name, and the family she belongs to," said I, slipping a guinea into her hand.

"It is not in my power, sir, to satisfy you in any of those matters," replied the poor woman, offering me the guinea back again; which having refused to take, I said, "It seems a little particular that you should not know the name of a lady who visits you."

She then informed me "that her husband was a labouring man, who worked at a place about a mile from the cottage; that, some weeks ago, she had occasion to send her eldest daughter to him three hours before the usual time of his return home; that the youngest

falling a crying to be allowed to accompany her sister, and the weather being fair, she had consented; but when the children arrived at the place where he usually was at work, their father was gone elsewhere, and they were obliged to return. On their way home an unexpected rain had fallen; the children were drenched to the skin; and the youngest not being able to walk the whole way, the eldest carried her till she was ready to sink with fatigue. The lady was passing in her carriage at that moment: moved with compassion at the sight of the children, she had stopped her carriage, and taken them into it." By the elder child's direction, the postillion drove to the cottage. The mother had not gone in search of them, because she never doubted their having found their father, and being under his care. The poor woman added, "that the lady had entered the cottage, seen the children put to bed with as much care as if she had been their mother, had given

her money to buy them clothes——Oh! gentlemen,” continued she, with fervour, “the lady you are inquiring after is, indeed, an angel, if ever there was one on earth, though my husband will not allow me to say so.”

“Why will he not allow you?”

“He says there are no angels but those which come from heaven; and this lady has never been there as yet.”

“Your husband is a very religious man?”

“Yes, that he is; but he is a very honest man also.”

“You do not think him the worse for his religion, then?”

“Not a bit—it rather does him good. It made him contented, even when things were at the worst with us. The same cross accidents which set others a-cursing makes him say his prayers. When I told him that the lady’s happening to pass just when the children were on the road was a very lucky accident,

he said "there was no accident in it; for it was all owing to Providence; and therefore I ought to be thankful to God."

"Well, what had you to answer to that?"

I answered, "I was thankful to God, whether it was owing to accident or to Providence. But, after all, I thought myself chiefly obliged to the lady."

"What is the lady's name?" said I.

"I asked that oftener than once," said the woman; "but the servants had orders not to tell it: but I discovered where she lived."

"I am glad of that," replied I.—"Where does she live?"

"I am next to certain," answered the woman, "that she lives in London—for"—

"What part of London?"

"Nay, that," rejoined she, "I never could learn."

As it was now too late to think of overtaking the chaise, I continued my inquiries, and was informed that the lady had promised to

place the eldest girl, of whom she seemed particularly fond, at a school in the neighbourhood, and to continue to assist the family in other respects.

The poor woman, observing that this information made me more anxious to know who the lady was, said, "I am sure your honour will not be long in finding her out; for I have already told you that she lives in London: and, from what I have heard, there are not a great many such women there; and what there are must, no doubt, be of the first-rate quality."

With this I was obliged to be satisfied, and so took leave of the cottage, which I possibly may revisit on my return to London.—Travers and I had a good deal of conversation on this incognita as we proceeded on our journey; and after I had finished my business with the person who waited for me here, we resumed the same after supper, till he became drowsy and went to bed. I seized the pen,

and have given you this important narrative.

To-morrow we shall be at my brother's by his hour of breakfast.

Adieu !

J. MORDAUNT.

LETTER LXV.

The Hon. JOHN MORDAUNT to Col. SOMMERS.

Rose-Mount.

HERE I have been these three days; and, though I have no information to give you on the main point, I feel myself disposed to write to you.

Habit is said to be a second nature. I used to think myself an exception to that maxim; yet my long practice of scribbling from Vevay has rendered letter-writing a pleasure, which I formerly considered as a task. In proof of this effect of habit I could also name some of our acquaintance who married for conveniency, without one particle of love, and, of course, began their conjugal career in a state of indifference towards their yoke-mate; but, by the habit of dragging the same weight together, both acquired a kind of affection for each other, which gradually in-

creased, and now they are never happy a-funder.

These observations, you will presume, will naturally incline me to break my resolution against marrying, and listen to my brother's advice. So perhaps they might, if I could not name a greater number of couples of our acquaintance who married for love, and love alone, grew sick of each other within a few months, found their mutual complaint to increase the more they were together, and never were tolerably easy unless they were a-funder.

What is the meaning of this contrariety? Is it possible to believe that habit operates so fantastically as to reconcile us only to what we dislike, and to render us averse to what we are fond of? No,—this idea is too whimsical to be just. *Your* experience, my dear Sommers, and that of your Juliet, will refute it.

Those in the first predicament, who marry in spite of dislike or indifference, are generally

men whose leading passion is avarice, who think domestic disgust and disquiet do not overbalance the pleasures which money can procure ; or phlegmatic indolent women, incapable of a lively passion, who, being sensible of no such great difference between one man and another as a difference of fortune makes, sacrifice the man they prefer in all other respects, if he is deficient in fortune, to him they condemn or are entirely indifferent about, if he be well provided in that article : and it frequently happens, that their original contempt of their husband mellows into indifference ; and indifference, by dint of habit, and by the continued affectation of love, produces at last a species of liking bordering on good-will : just, by way of example, as those who cannot afford claret take to port, or perhaps porter ; which, though unpalatable at first, becomes less and less so by dint of patience and perseverance, and at last tolerably suits their taste.

Those, on the other hand, who, despising all other considerations, marry from love, and separate soon after from hatred, may be compared to people who are so fond of claret, that, without thinking of the price, indulge in excesses which create disgust and remorse.

Notwithstanding the experience I have had that habit can overcome dislike in the instance of letter-writing, and notwithstanding that, in the foregoing illustrations, the latter produces the most dismal catastrophe, I am so framed, that if I ever should venture on matrimony at all, I am convinced I would choose to risk the fate of the claret-drinkers.

That my brother has a particular lady in his eye, to whom he wishes me united, I suspect; that I do not know the woman, to whom I should not think it a great misfortune to be so united, is certain. If I were obliged at this moment to make a choice, I do not know that I should not fix, at all risks, on the lady of the cottage, mentioned in my

last. Can any thing be a stronger proof of the slight impresson which all my female acquaintance have made on me? The truth is, none of them ever occupy my thoughts; whereas, that incognita has seldom been absent from my mind since I saw her. I don't know that I have not before seen women of equal beauty; but I am sure I never beheld so intelligent a countenance, or one so peculiarly to my taste. On my soul, it is singular that she should engross me so much. I shall surely forget her within a day or two. I had but a mere glance of the woman. Were I to allow the transient apparition to teaze me much longer, I should deserve, as Benedict says, "to have my eyes pickt out, and to have my person hung up for the sign of blind Cupid."

Lord Cardon arrived here the day after Travers and I. I believe you are not acquainted with that agreeable old peer. To give you some notion of him, as well as of

my kinsman governor Flint, shall be the subject of this letter.

To an excellent understanding lord Cardon joins the most cheerful disposition, and the happiest talent of pleasing. Some people think that he has rather more wit and humour than is consistent with the dignity of the peerage. Lord Gelid once told me so, and lamented it greatly, because he acknowledged, "that, in some other respects, lord Cardon was much of a nobleman."

With all his pleasantry, and air of carelessness, few men pay more serious attention to the calls of humanity. He often makes the first subservient to the purposes of the last; and has often drawn those, whom compassion could not have moved, into acts of beneficence for the joke's sake. He once prevailed on lord Gelid, the most unfeeling of mankind, to perform an act of charity from pure sympathy. Having applied for an office in his lordship's gift, for a person whom

he represented to be in peculiarly hard circumstances, and mentioned his having five children to maintain,—lord Gelid answered, “that it was no hardship for a man to maintain his own children.”

Seeing that this statement had no effect, lord Cardon tried another, which he thought might create more sympathy.

“I am of your lordship’s opinion,” replied he, “that it is no hardship for a man to maintain his *own* children; but I hope you will admit that it is a considerable hardship for a man to be obliged to maintain children that are not his own.”

“Not his own!” exclaimed lord Gelid: “Whose children are they then?”

“Alas! my lord,” replied lord Cardon, “what augments the hardship of this man’s case is, that the question you put is what none but his wife can answer. All that the worthy man himself is physically certain of is, that the children are not his.”

There was something in this statement

which awakened the feelings of lord Gelid so uncommonly, that he granted the favour demanded.

Since his arrival here, lord Cardon has also, in a manner peculiar to himself, prevailed on my brother to promise to serve a person against whom he had been a good deal prejudiced.

You have heard the story of Mrs. ——. After that affair was first talked of, and when it was thought that no part of her fortune would be recovered, many who had called themselves her friends, and had profited by her extravagance, abandoned her entirely, without examining whether she was so much to blame as was said, or not.

Lord Cardon for some time seemed to be her only advocate; and yesterday, at breakfast, he endeavoured to interest my brother in her case, which is soon to be brought before the House of Peers.

My brother expressed some surprise at his taking so warm a part in a person who had behaved so very imprudently.

“Had she always behaved with prudence, my lord,” said lord Cardon, “she would not have stood in need of any body to take her part. But, I am convinced, that advantage has been taken of her imprudent conduct, to give a much worse representation of her than she deserves. At all events, my lord, the imprudence of her conduct has nothing to do with the justice of her claim. It is your attention to her case only that I solicit your lordship for : from me she has a right to expect all the support in my power ; I lie under a very important obligation to that lady.”

“I cannot conceive,” said my brother, “how your lordship can lie under an important obligation to so frivolous a woman !”

“You will be still more at a loss,” rejoined lord Cardon, “when I assure you that the obligation under which she laid me is increased, instead of being diminished, by the frivolity of the unfortunate lady’s character. In short, my lord,” continued he, “though no traces of it remain now, Mrs. — was, about twenty years ago, a very

beautiful woman ; and at that time I was (and I fear some traces of it remain still) a very giddy fellow ; so much so, that I actually made a proposal of marriage to the lady in question, which she had the goodness to reject. This was an obligation of such importance, as, without being the most ungrateful of men, I never can forget."

"Now that I am acquainted with the very essential obligation which your lordship lies under to Mrs. —, you may rely upon it," answered my brother, "that I shall take pains to understand her case ; and, if I think she has justice on her side, I will join your lordship in doing her all the service in my power."

I am summoned to dinner ; but if it rains to-morrow as incessantly as it has done to-day, I shall give you a little more of lord Cardon. Farewell !



END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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